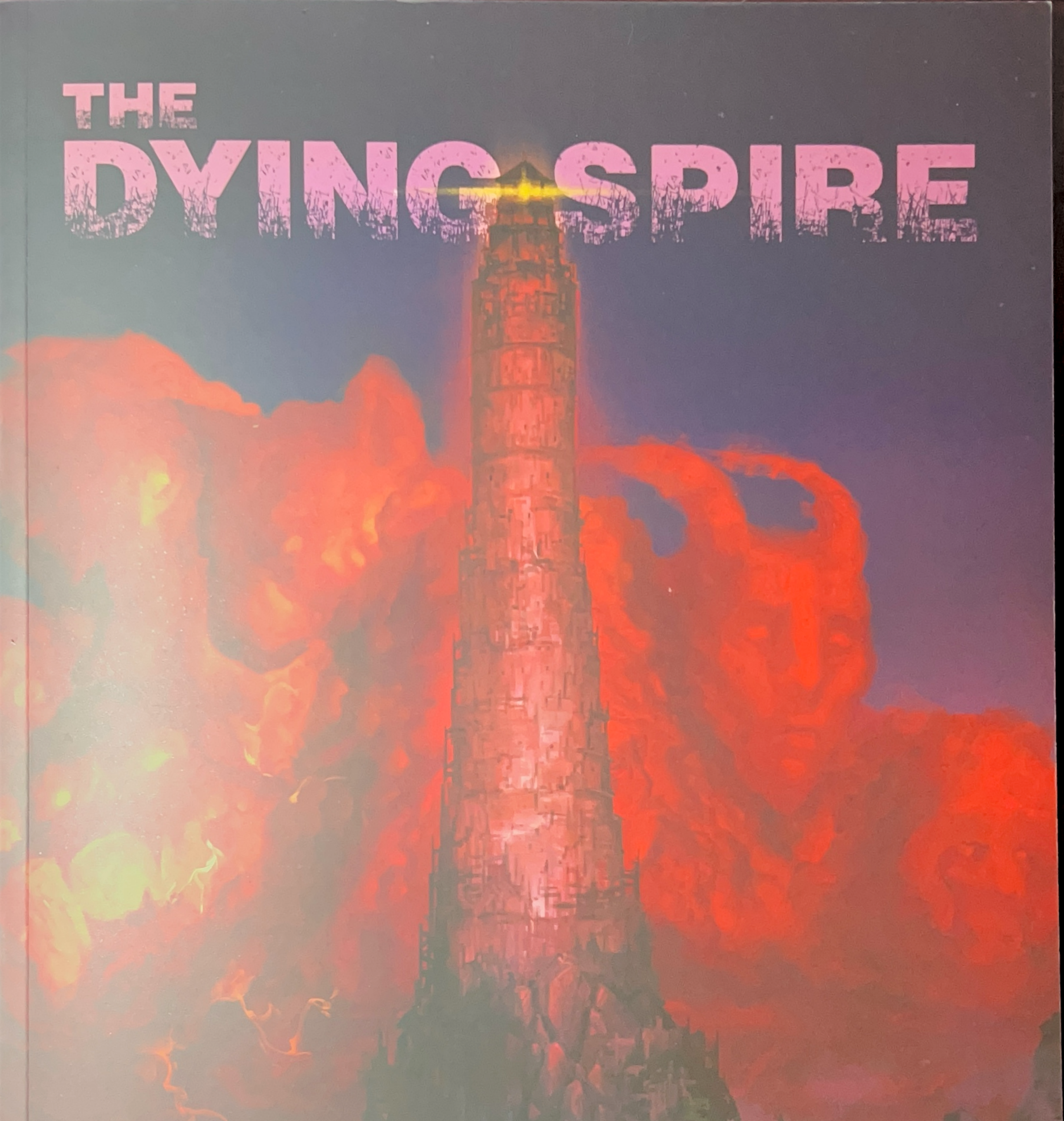
THE DYING SPIRE



DAGGERHEART

A TIER 2 ADVENTURE

RPG DAY 2026 FREE RPG DAY

DARRINGTON PRESS

Introduction

Happy Free RPG Day from Darrington Press!

This adventure is your doorway to Daggerheart, Darrington Press's TTRPG that brings collaborative storytelling and cinematic gameplay to your table. Within this booklet, you'll find everything you need to jump right into the game: a full five-act adventure with accompanying rules, play guides for the GM and players, five comprehensive pregenerated character sheets and card loadouts, and adversary and environment standees to create dynamic play at any table.

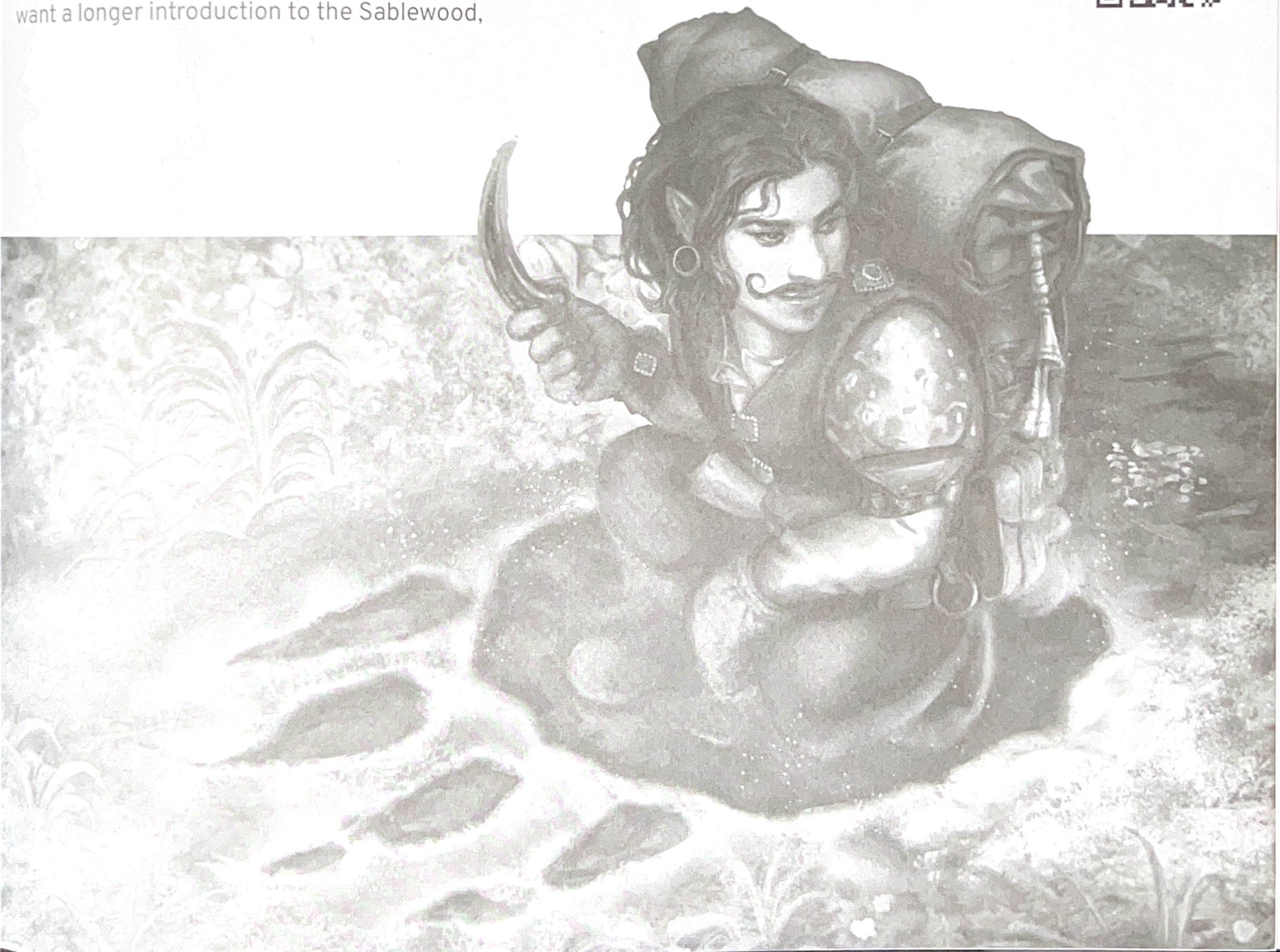
In this adventure, the Whitefire Arcanist of the Sablewood asks the party to investigate a mysterious Spire deep in the Sablewood to check on her friend, a local Spire Keeper. The signal fire atop their Spire is flickering out, and should it go dark, no one knows what danger might befall the Sablewood.

While standalone, *The Dying Spire* continues the story of *The Sablewood Messengers*, a free quickstart introductory adventure. If you want a more guided adventure for your first time playing or GMing, or you want a longer introduction to the Sablewood, *The Sablewood Messengers* can be downloaded at **www.daggerheart.com/downloads** alongside the Sablewood location guide. You can join us in **our Discord** to ask questions, give feedback, and connect with others who are looking to play Daggerheart.

Daggerheart emphasizes adventurous scenes and montages, shared worldbuilding at your table, and the sweeping highs and gutting lows of a narrative story shaped by the party's Hope and Fear rolls. As you get swept away into the Sablewood, let the dice and the players lead as you make this adventure your own. Remember: Every roll with Fear makes rolls with Hope all the more triumphant.

Above all, have fun—and connect with us at **www.daggerheart.com** for more resources, exciting news, and the Void, an exclusive playtesting hub where you can dig into more Daggerheart!

Join us on our Discord to ask questions, give feedback, and connect with others who are looking to play Daggerheart!



THE DYING

A TIER 2 ADVENTURE

MATERIALS

Along with this adventure, you'll need the foll

- A pencil for each player and a pair of scis
- A set of polyhedral dice: 4-sided (d4), 6-s 8-sided (d8), 10-sided (d10), 12-sided (d1 (d20).
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THE DYING SPIRE

A TIER 2 ADVENTURE

MATERIALS

Along with this adventure, you'll need the following materials:

- A pencil for each player and a pair of scissors.
- A set of polyhedral dice: 4-sided (d4), 6-sided (d6), 8-sided (d8), 10-sided (d10), 12-sided (d12), and 20-sided (d20).
- Two d12s of different colors (for Duality Dice).
- A handful of character tokens (at least 7 per player). These can be anything small that won't be confused for dice.
- 12 Fear tokens for the GM. These can be anything small that won't be confused for dice.

If you have extra dice, it's ideal for each player to have their own set of polyhedral dice and two d12 Duality Dice.

CHOOSING CHARACTERS

The GM should read aloud the character descriptions below and have each player take the four-page character packet for the hero they'd like to play.

If you've played *The Sablewood Messengers*, you'll recognize most of these characters. They've all reached level 2 and gained new features.

MARLOWE FAIRWIND, THE LOREBORNE ELF SORCERER
She is the personal mage to King Emeris, and is responsible for bringing this group together. She appears calm—until she isn't.

BARNACLE, THE UNDERBORNE RIBBET ROGUE
There is no danger he won't get into and no situation he can't get out of. He fears water and hates swimming.

GARRICK REED, THE HIGHBORNE HUMAN WARRIOR
A defector from a distant military force, he approaches most conflicts with a "kill 'em with kindness" attitude.

KHARI NIX, THE RIDGEBORNE GIANT GUARDIAN
With a dry sense of humor and unwavering loyalty, she suffers no fools. Khari was practically born with an axe in her hand.

VARIAN SOTO, THE WILDBORNE KATARI RANGER
They take a "shoot first, ask questions later" approach. Any problem that can't be solved with a bow isn't a problem yet.

A NOTE TO GAME MASTERS

This is a Tier 2 adventure that assumes the players already understand how to play Daggerheart. If they haven't, or if the players are still getting used to the pregenerated characters, you might need to be more cautious with this adventure's encounters so you don't fully take down the party. Give particular consideration to how much Fear you're spending, aiming to help the players have a great time instead of running your adversaries as hard as you can.

The Sablewood is a downloadable location designed for Daggerheart, so when you finish this adventure, you can easily continue the story by exploring additional areas of the forest. For more about the Sablewood, visit **www.daggerheart.com/downloads.**

GETTING STARTED

Start the adventure by reading the following text aloud:

Deep in the heart of the Sablewood, a vast forest filled with twisting paths and hybrid animals, there rests the peaceful village of Hush. An elder of Hush known as the Whitefire Arcanist has asked your party to investigate one of the Spires that tower high above the forest canopy.

The signal fire that burns at the top of the nearest tower has grown weaker, and the Arcanist needs you to check on her friend Vaya, the Spire Keeper who tends to it. If something were to happen to the Spire, there's no telling what could befall the Sablewood.

Your party sets out, map in hand, just after sunset. Now, a few hours later, the Spire looms overhead and only a short stretch of thick forest lies between it and the party.

AS A SEQUEL TO *THE SABLEWOOD MESSENGERS*

If you're playing *The Dying Spire* as a follow-up to *The Sablewood Messengers*, you can connect these adventures by allowing the PCs to take a long rest, play out anything they'd like to do in Hush, and then begin their journey by reading the following text aloud:

Before leaving, you took the day to eat, rest, and recover. Filled with the vigor of your recent success in the Open Veil, the trek went by quickly.

Through the darkness, the signal fire flickers atop the Spire. What mysterious dangers does its faltering glow portend?

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Act One:

THE SPIRE ON THE RIDGE

At the request of the Whitefire Arcanist, the party travels to the nearest Spire to check on Keeper Vaya. On the way, they meet a pair of travelers in need and fight a herd of goathogs.

Act Two:

A STOLEN HEART

Keeper Vaya reveals that the Spire's Brambleheart was stolen, and it will slowly drain and mutate everything around it. The PCs must follow the thieves' trail, recover the Brambleheart, and return it to the Spire before the Elder Tree inside dies.

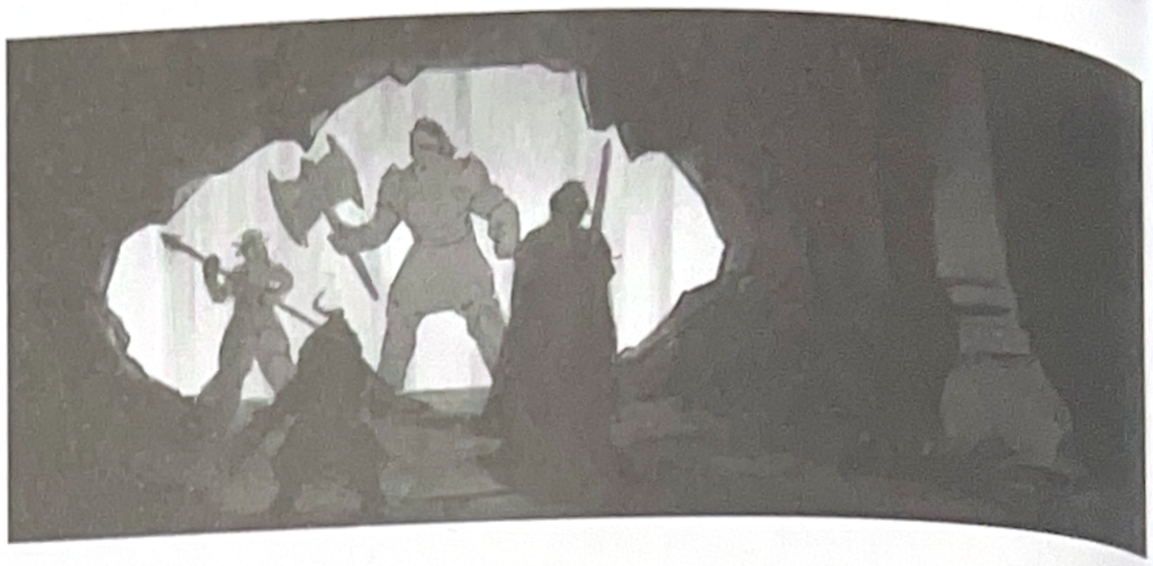
Act Three:

LUCENT PURSUIT

The party's pursuit of the Brambleheart thieves takes them through glowing rapids filled with mutated eeligators and a deadly waterfall that hides a secret.

Act Four:

INTO THE CAVE



The party descends into a hidden cave system, learns why the Brambleheart was stolen, and faces the terrible horror its power resurrected.

Act Five:

THE WAY BACK

The PCs race to return the Brambleheart to the Spire before Keeper Vaya or the Elder Tree are lost forever.

ABOUT THE SABLEWOOD SPIRES

Deep in the Sablewood lies an expansive, densely forested valley dotted with impossibly tall Spires that tower over the treetop canopy. At the apex of each Spire burns a signal fire to indicate it's being tended by a member of a mysterious clerical order called the Spire Keepers. When a Keeper dies, their signal fire burns out, calling another Keeper to take up their mantle. Outside of the Keepers, no one knows the true nature or purpose of the Spires, but all believe great disaster would befall the Sablewood if they were left untended.

The Spires have existed since time immemorial, and each bears strange and unique features. The local communities have their own beliefs about their origins but are united in their support of the Keepers and regularly deliver food, medicine, and other supplies to them.

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THE SPIRE ON THE RIDGE

ACT ONE

THE VIEW

To continue the adventure, read the following text aloud:

> *After several hours of travel, your party reaches the lip of the valley where the Spire resides.*
>
> *As you crest a ridge before descending into the thickly forested valley, you get a spectacular overview of the Sablewood bathed in moonlight. Distant rock formations rise like carved pillars holding up the sky, and the wind whips around you like a clinging child. The Spire is in sight, just as the map said it would be, a short distance beyond the mouth of the valley below. The very top of the tower glows with a gently flickering light. You know that's where Vaya should be.*

Ask each of the players one of the questions below or create your own.

OPTIONAL QUESTIONS

What's unique or unexpected about the Spire's material or construction?

What about this valley is different from the parts of the Sablewood you traveled through to get here?

How do you know the flame illuminating the top of the Spire is something other than normal fire?

The wind here carries a peculiar scent. What memory does it call to mind?

What about the Spire's exterior projects stability and security?

What part of the Spire appears to have been altered or repaired recently, perhaps by Keeper Vaya himself?

As the players answer these questions, build on their descriptions of the tower, working in the details they supplied while adding your own.

A PAIR OF TRAVELERS APPEAR

Read the following text aloud:

> *From your vantage point high on the ridge, a katari woman and a human man can be seen conversing at the base of a large tree down in the valley.*
>
> *Between the distance and the howl of the wind, you can't make out what they're saying, but the katari seems to be sick or injured. What do you do?*

Allow the PCs to roleplay a bit as they travel down the ridge and toward the Spire. When they're done, read the following text aloud:

> *As you near the clearing surrounding the Spire, you come across the two people you saw from atop the ridge. Now that you're closer, you can see that the katari woman's face is gaunt and ashen, and she's clutching her stomach. The other traveler, a short but powerful-looking human with curly hair, is at her side with a waterskin.*
>
> *Do you approach them? If so, what do you say?*

THE TRAVELERS

The travelers behave differently depending on how the party treats them:

If the party is friendly, the travelers introduce themselves as **Hergl** (the human) and **Lika** (the katari), nearby villagers who recently delivered supplies to Keeper Vaya's Spire. They were attacked by raging goathogs (half-goat, half-warthog animals native to the Sablewood) on the way back.

The travelers can give the party the following pieces of information:

- Normally goathogs aren't very aggressive, but something was wrong with these: they were gray and rotting. One of them scratched Lika, and now she's sick.
- Hergl gave Lika a sableberry salve, but it doesn't seem to be helping. They must return to their village's healer, who can hopefully cure her.
- If a PC offers to help or heal Lika, she turns them down, saying it will only delay her journey home—but she returns their goodwill by giving them a sableberry salve (clears 2 HP and all conditions when used).
- If asked whether they saw Vaya, the travelers say that he didn't come down when they arrived, so they left the supplies at the foot of the Spire. Hergl adds, "Best to not bother a Keeper at work."

If the party is hostile to the travelers, they become tight-lipped and demand to be left alone. If attacked or harassed, they immediately escape into the woods together.

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GOATHOGS ATTACK!

After parting ways with the travelers, the party presses on to the Spire. As they draw near, the plants around them become increasingly dry, wilted, and drained of color.

A PC can investigate the plants with an **Instinct or Knowledge Roll (14)**. On a success, ask them what they observe that indicates the flora has been drained of vitality and subtly mutated by strange magic.

When the party reaches the clearing at the foot of the Spire, they're ambushed by a herd of Decaying Goathogs.

SETTING UP THE BATTLE MAP

Set up the terrain and standees found in this guide and invite the players to help you create the small clearing that will serve as the combat arena. Once they've placed their characters and the Spire entrance, add as many **Decaying Goathogs** as there are players. Then ask the party what they want to do.

ENCOUNTER GUIDE

This is a relatively simple encounter with a single adversary type. The Goathogs can hit hard, but they aren't very durable.

Spend Fear and mark Stress aggressively, using the Goathogs' **"Persistent"** passive and **"Ram"** action to keep the pressure on. Remember that once an adversary marks their last Stress, they become *Vulnerable*, making them even easier to hit. If you notice the fight is dragging, have the Goathogs flee after a PC successfully hits one with an attack.

If the players hesitate at the top of the encounter, take the spotlight and have a Goathog attack, putting a PC in immediate danger.

After the battle, if the PCs investigate the Goathogs' bodies, they find that they're rotting piles of meat. Something magical caused them to decompose while they were alive.

Decaying Goathog

Tier 2 Standard

Description: *A wild half-mountain goat, half-warthog with decaying skin.*
Motives & Tactics: *Devour, encircle, intimidate, knock back*

Tusks: Melee | 2d8+2 phy
ATK: +3
Difficulty: 12
Thresholds: 12/20
HP: 3
Stress: 3

FEATURES

Persistent - Passive: **Mark a Stress** to reroll an attack made by the Goathog.

Ram - Action: **Mark a Stress** to move through all targets in a line up to Close range. All targets must succeed on an Agility Reaction Roll (13) or take **2d10+4** physical damage.

Gore and Toss - Reaction: When the Goathog makes a successful standard attack, you can **spend a Fear** to gain a **+1d8** bonus to the damage roll and throw the target anywhere within Close range.

Decaying Goathog #1
HP: ○ ○ ○ Stress: ○ ○ ○

Decaying Goathog #2
HP: ○ ○ ○ Stress: ○ ○ ○

Decaying Goathog #3
HP: ○ ○ ○ Stress: ○ ○ ○

Decaying Goathog #4
HP: ○ ○ ○ Stress: ○ ○ ○

Decaying Goathog #5
HP: ○ ○ ○ Stress: ○ ○ ○

Reminder: Reaction rolls don't generate Hope or Fear.

ENTERING THE SPIRE

After the encounter, the PCs can make their way into the Spire. When they do, read the following text aloud:

> *The Spire looms before you, casting a soft shadow in the bright moonlight, and the wind whipping past its highest reaches whistles unnervingly. A weak firelight flickers in the window, but is it a welcome or a warning?*

If the players ask, there are no supplies at the foot of the Spire and calling up to the window above yields no answer. All vegetation in the clearing around the Spire is colorless, warped, or rotting.

Ask the players questions about the door to the Spire. Is it inviting or foreboding? What is it made of? What does its design or construction reveal about the person (or people) who crafted it?

The door isn't locked. When the party enters the Spire, they discover the largest and oldest tree any of them has ever seen inside, its trunk reaching up hundreds of feet.

To illustrate how high up the tree and Spire extend, tell each player they must succeed on a **Strength Reaction Roll (12)** to climb the stairs without marking a Stress.

As the party ascends the interior of the Spire, prompt the players for additional details about what they notice and what it tells them about this wondrous place. What are the steps made from, and how were they constructed? What's notable about the tree's scent or texture? Can anyone read the symbols carved into its bark? What do they see on the interior walls of the Spire?

Use those descriptions to propel you into Act Two.

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STOLEN HEART

SPIREPOINT

the players reach the top room of the Spire, read the ing text aloud:

ending the last few steps, you arrive at the Spirepoint. he center of this large, circular chamber, the topmost nches of the tree are woven into a nestlike dais on ch a large pyre sits, bathing the room in the same kering glow that was visible from outside. Underneath pyre is a conspicuously empty space where the tree nches have been forcefully hacked apart.

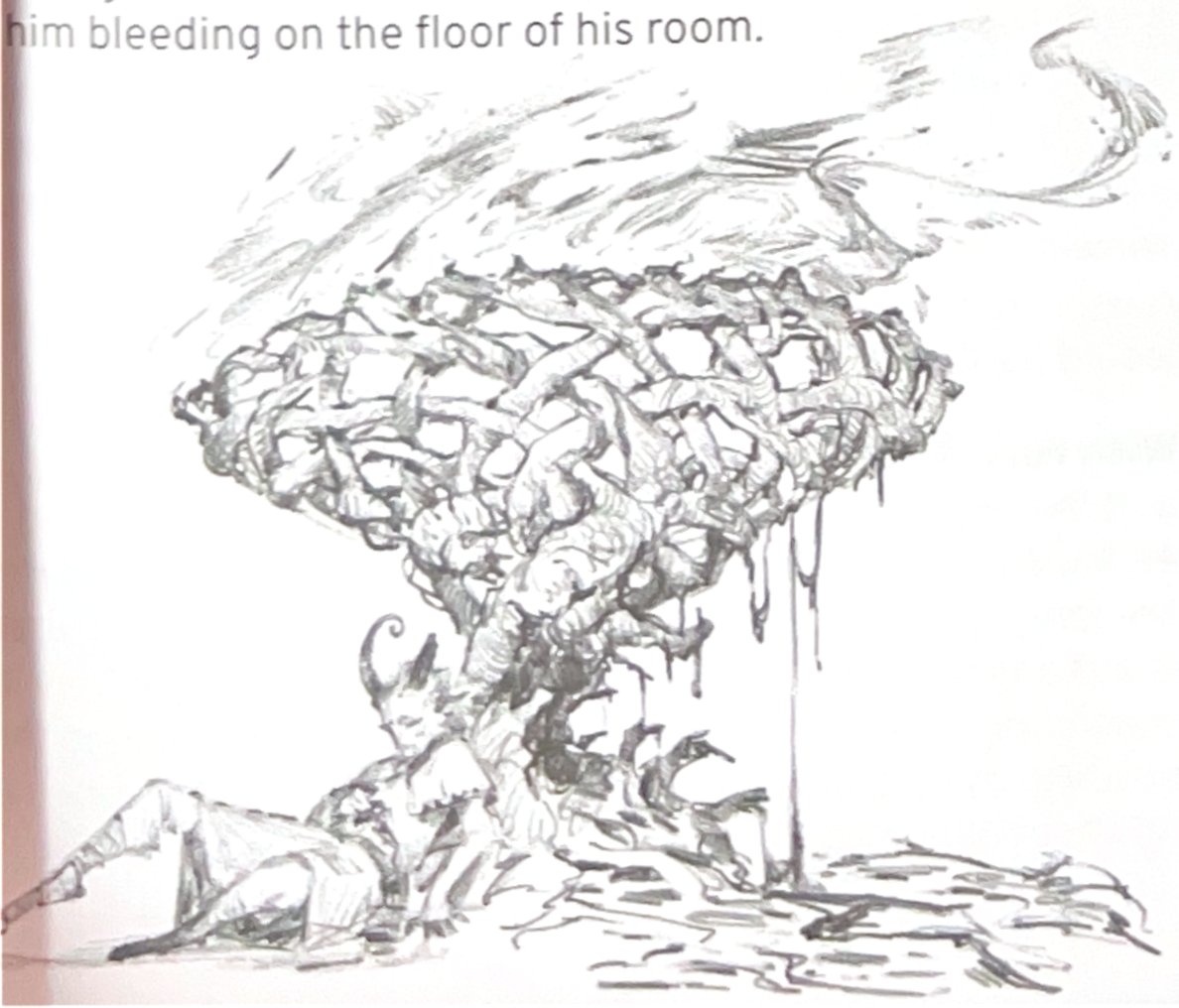
ide the dying flames, a middle-aged faun lies bleeding. slowly lifts his gaze to you, and while his body appears dy to give out, his eyes burn even brighter than the fire ide him.

me to finish your fell work? Very well..." He lifts his nd to conjure a powerful magical effect, but the effort austs the last of his energy, and he crumples to the or, barely conscious.

faun is **Vaya (he/him)**, the Spire Keeper the party was to find. The Spirepoint is his home: a single chamber at highest level of the Spire. It is modestly appointed with ything needed for a simple, monastic life: a kitchen, ry, small library, sleeping area, and so forth. If the PCs stigate the area, ask them questions about what they and work the answers into their conversation with Vaya.

PCs can stabilize Vaya with a successful **Knowledge (12)** to dress his wounds. They automatically succeed ey expend resources such as a healing potion or eberry salve.

e the PCs introduce themselves, Vaya apologizes for taking them for attackers and recounts the events that him bleeding on the floor of his room.



Vaya can reveal the following information:

- **The stone exterior of each Spire was constructed to protect and channel the Elder Tree within it.**
- **The Elder Trees are the oldest and tallest trees in the Sablewood**, planted ages ago by the first Keepers. The roots of the Elder Trees reach deep underground into an infinite well of wild magic.
- **At the crown of each Elder Tree is a Brambleheart**, a magical knot of thorns that draws wild magic up through the Elder Tree. Together, the Bramblehearts create the **Spire Weave**, an invisible mesh of wild magic that keeps the Sablewood verdant and thriving.
- **Vaya was tricked by a katari woman and human man** pretending to deliver supplies to him. When he let them into the Spire, they talked their way up to the Spirepoint and attacked. He confirms it was Hergl and Lika if the PCs describe them.
- **The travelers ripped the Brambleheart from the crown of the Elder Tree.** Vaya doesn't know why anyone would steal the Brambleheart, considering it endangers the thieves and the rest of the Sablewood.
- **Without its Brambleheart, the Elder Tree will die**, weakening the Spire Weave and endangering the Sablewood in unknown ways.
- **Outside of the Spire's protective cocoon, the Brambleheart drains and warps everything around it.** Plants lose color before turning to dust, and animals rot and rage before dying. This is what caused the decay around the tower. If asked, Vaya confirms that Lika seemed to be succumbing to the Brambleheart's influence.
- **Vaya can keep the Elder Tree alive by channeling his own life essence into it**, but there's no telling for how long. He needs to stay here while the party tracks down the thieves and retrieves the Brambleheart.
- **The thieves can be tracked by following their trail of decay through the Sablewood.**

Before the party leaves, Keeper Vaya gives them a **Spirestone Strongbox** big enough to hold the Brambleheart, which is the size of a large melon. Carrying the Brambleheart outside of the box is extremely dangerous and can cause long-term effects on its bearer.

Time is of the essence, so the party can't take a rest yet. After saying their goodbyes, Vaya magically links his life essence to the Elder Tree and the party begins their pursuit of Hergl and Lika.

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THROUGH THE SABLEWOOD

The party must succeed on a **Group Action Roll (15)** to safely traverse the dense forest as they trail Hergl and Lika.

GROUP ACTION ROLL MECHANICS

Nominate one PC to lead the action. Each player then describes how their character collaborates on the task.

The leader makes an action roll, while the other players make reaction rolls. The trait for each roll is determined by how they're contributing.

The leader's action roll gains a +1 bonus for each reaction roll that succeeds and a −1 penalty for each reaction roll that fails.

REACTION ROLLS

Reaction rolls work like action rolls, except they don't generate Hope, Fear, or additional GM moves.

When a player critically succeeds on a reaction, they don't clear a Stress or gain a Hope, but they do ignore any effects that would still impact them on a success.

Additionally, other characters can't help on a reaction roll—though a player can add a bonus (such as spending a Hope to use an Experience) as long as they decide to do so before rolling.

A PC can use whichever trait makes sense based on how they contribute to the effort. The leader's roll gains an additional +1 bonus if the party did something that would aid their effort before leaving Keeper Vaya, such as using the Spirepoint windows to spy the trail of decay from above.

Play out the party's journey through the Sablewood as a montage, using the result of the group action roll to inspire your description of the Sablewood's hazards or inviting the players to describe their shared success.

REACHING THE RIVER

The thieves' trail leads them to the Lucent River, a swift current that glows with a cerulean luminescence. When the party breaks through the tree line, they find a small dock with a lone figure at the end of it.

Captain Surely (he/him) is an old simiah who looks like an orangutan in a threadbare uniform from a distant army. He's standing next to a hand-painted sign that reads, "LUCENT RENTALS, BOATS FOR GOLD!" Ask one of the players to describe a detail about Surely that sets him apart from others in the Sablewood.

Captain Surely

Jovial, Sarcastic, Weathered
Heritage: Seaborne Simiah (he/him)
Experiences: Sailor +4, Fierce Negotiator +3
Description: An old sailor with a rowdy sense of humor and a steely gaze. He's just as happy to doze in his rocking chair as he is to exchange clever words with a rude stranger. Though he's sworn off violence, he's nimble of body and mind and good at avoiding blows.
Motive: Retire rich and map the entirety of the Lucent River.

The result of the previous group action roll determines how long ago the thieves started down the river and Surely's starting attitude toward the PCs:

ON A SUCCESS...

With Hope, the PCs make it through the Sablewood quickly and without issue. When they arrive at the Lucent River, they've just missed Hergl and Lika, who overpaid to rent a boat from Captain Surely. As a result, Surely is in a great mood and speaks freely, revealing that Hergl and Lika requested a vessel capable of navigating rapids.

With Fear, the PCs make it through the Sablewood quickly, but the effort of keeping up such a fast pace means they must each mark a Stress. They arrive moments after Hergl and Lika have stolen one of Captain Surely's boats, and he's livid. The party must calm him down before he'll consider letting another boat out of his sight.

ON A FAILURE...

With Hope, the trek through the Sablewood is slow going, and each PC must mark a Stress from the exhaustion. When they arrive at the bank of the river, Lika and Hergl are long gone, having stolen a boat hours ago, and the area is already showing serious signs of decay. However, Captain Surely reveals that he overheard the thieves discussing which boat would be the best for rapids.

With Fear, the trek through the Sablewood is slow going, and the PCs must each mark a Hit Point due to injury and exhaustion. When they arrive at the riverbank, Lika and Hergl are long gone, having stolen a boat hours ago, and the area is already showing serious signs of decay. Captain Surely is suspicious of strangers and hostile to the party, making them promise to take vengeance on "the boat thieves" before he'll let them take a boat.

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HOOSING A BOAT

ely has two boats tied to the dock, each hitched to a pair iant craymeleons (half-crayfish, half-chameleon). The ty must secure one of these boats to follow Hergl and Lika vnriver. The options are:

SKIFF: Faster, lighter, and more responsive, but with only just enough room to seat the party—and no deck.

PONTOON BOAT: Heavier and slower, but with a deck spacious enough for the PCs to move around on.

te the party's selection, as it will have a mechanical effect the environment (see "Lucent River Rapids" environment) the next act.

ay out the negotiation with Captain Surely. Even if he starts it hostile, he comes around if the PCs offer gold, promise bring back the boat Hergl and Lika took, or explain the saster they're trying to prevent.

nce the party has chosen a boat and climbed aboard, ask ho's piloting the boat and what strange or unexpected nechanism they use to control it or the craymeleons pulling . Then read the following text aloud:

You push off from the dock, feeling the boat lurch as it catches the current and the craymeleons paddle forward. Captain Surely gives you a nod before leaning back in his rocking chair and whistling an old shanty.

The water glows brightly beneath you, revealing strange fish darting between the rocks. The current is steady and the night air is calm, at least for the moment. You all have the chance to take a short rest.

A SHORT REST

During a short rest, a PC may choose up to two of the following options. They may choose the same option twice.

TEND TO WOUNDS

Describe how you patch yourself up, then clear 1d4+2 HP. You can tend to an ally instead.

CLEAR STRESS

Describe how you blow off steam or pull yourself together, then clear 1d4+2 Stress.

REPAIR ARMOR

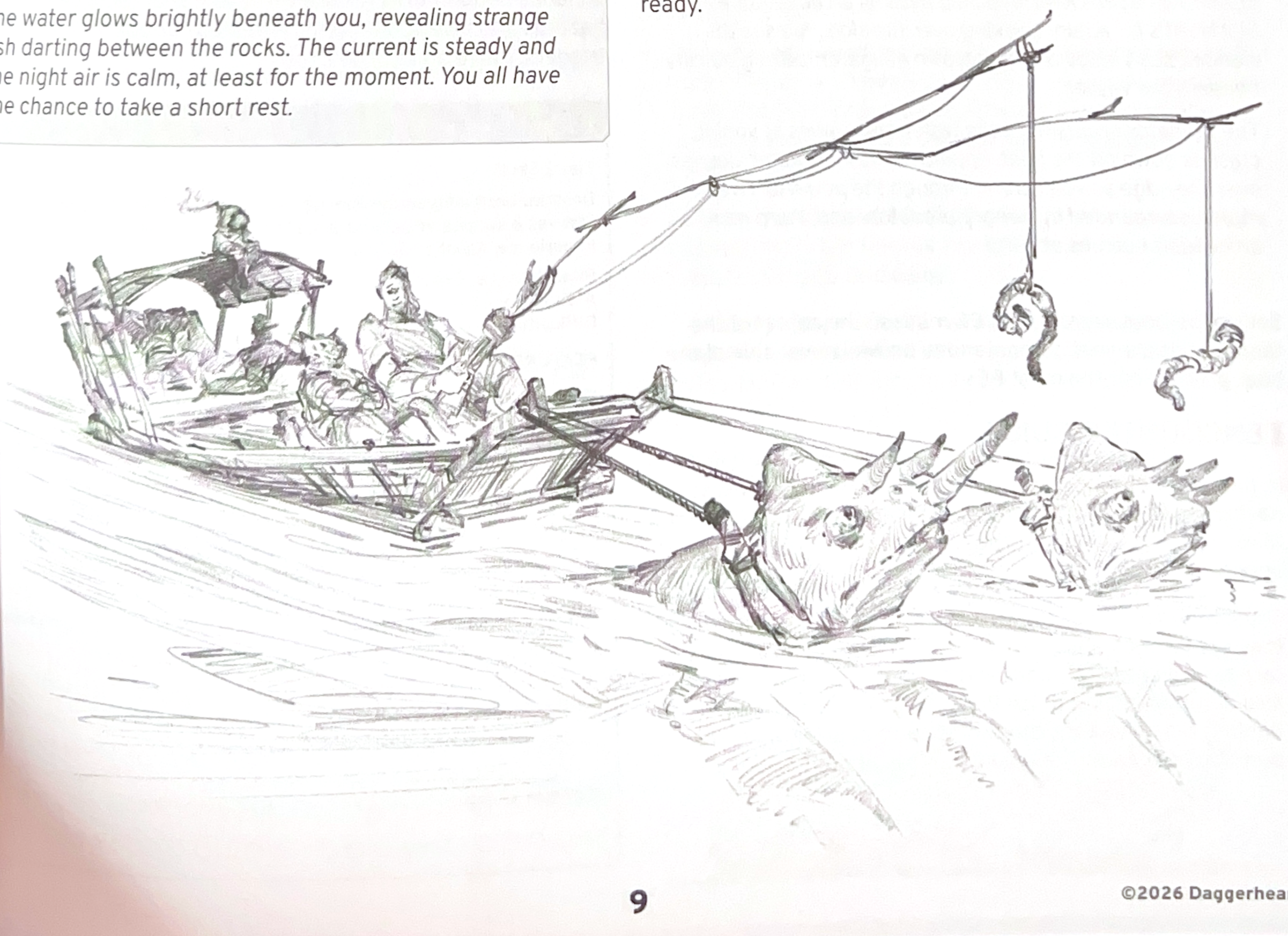
Describe how you quickly repair your armor, then clear 1d4+2 marked Armor Slots. You can repair an ally's armor instead.

PREPARE

Describe how you prepare yourself for the path ahead and gain a Hope. If you choose to Prepare with one or more members of your party, you each gain 2 Hope.

GM PREP DURING A REST

While the PCs are resting, you gain 1d4 Fear. Review the stat blocks and encounter guide on the following pages, then begin the next act when the party has rested and you're ready.



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LUCENT PURSUIT

ACT THREE

LUCENT RIVER RAPIDS

After everyone finishes their short rest, have each player describe one sign that the Brambleheart has been through this stretch of the river, such as dead fish, mutated animals peering out from the underbrush, or wilted foliage turning into ash. Then read the following text aloud:

Your journey downstream grants you a peaceful, if uneasy, rest until you come to a fork in the river with a sign pointing toward Highfall. It's obvious the thieves went that way.

You steer the craymeleons down that route. The river narrows and the current quickens. Looking ahead, you see increasingly harsh rapids and large, sharp rocks jutting up from the riverbed like broken teeth.

The water is as beautiful as it is dangerous, the luminous river becoming a kaleidoscope of blue and green as it churns around you.

Then... you see the eyes. Dozens of eyes peeking above the waves and vibrantly reflecting the moonlight. You know that these are eeligators—part eel, part gator, all hunger.

SLAM! The boat's keel is rocked hard by an eeligator as—SLAM!—it's hit again! Looking over the side, you see the slender, scaly body of a full-grown eeligator moving quickly beneath the vessel.

The predator erupts from the water and lunges at you! It crashes down on the boat, tipping it. Glowing water sloshes over the edge as you careen through the powerful river rapids, surrounded by hungry predators and sharp rocks as an eeligator climbs aboard!

Set up the boat, terrain, and PC minis at the center of the table, placing an eeligator standee on whichever side of the boat puts it near the most PCs.

ENCOUNTER GUIDE

In this encounter, the party must survive the rapids by navigating their boat around the obstacles (see the "Lucent River Rapids" environment) while monstrous eeligators climb aboard.

The boat the party chose affects how quickly and easily they get through obstacles, how much damage the boat can take before breaking apart, and how easily it capsizes. It also determines how much the PCs can move around while fighting the eeligators: the skiff is much smaller, while the pontoon boat's deck has room to move around.

Activate the environment's **River Run Countdown** by placing a die where the players can see it. Set the die to 9 if they are in the pontoon boat or 7 if they are in the skiff.

Then activate the environment's **Boat Hull Countdown** by placing another die near the party's boat. Set the die to 7 for the pontoon boat or 5 for the skiff.

These countdowns represent the party's attempt to navigate the rapids before their boat is destroyed. If the River Run countdown triggers first, they make it safely. If the Boat Hull countdown triggers first, the boat breaks. If you have a lot of Fear, spend it early to put the party on the back foot with the environment's **"Dangerous Waters"** action.

The encounter begins with one **Eeligator** on board. Remember that you can spend Fear not only to activate an environment or adversary's features, but also to summon additional adversaries or make other GM moves. A single Eeligator is easy to manage, but if several of them climb on board, their **"Feeding Frenzy"** action can be dangerous.

Allow the players to make action rolls against an Eeligator's Difficulty (13) to knock them off the boat instead of killing them. The Lucent River Rapids stat block additionally includes benchmarks for the Difficulty and damage of hazards you invent on the fly. When either countdown triggers, move on to "The Drop."

Lucent Eeligator

Tier 2 Skulk

Description: *A long, serpentine hybrid with a scaly hide and powerful jaws*
Motives & Tactics: *Hide, hunt, pull them into the water*
Experience: *Aquatic +3*

Bite: Melee | 2d8+4 phy
ATK: +3
Difficulty: 13

Thresholds: 10/17
HP: 4
Stress: 3

FEATURES

Feeding Frenzy - Action: **Spend a Fear** to have up to three Eeligators within Very Close range of a target move into Melee range with that target and make a standard attack. Each Eeligator makes their own attack roll. If any attacks succeed, combine their damage.

Death Grip - Reaction: When the Eeligator makes a successful standard attack, you can **mark a Stress** to lock their jaw onto the target. The target marks an additional HP and is *Restrained* until the Eeligator takes Major damage or makes a standard attack against a different target. A *Restrained* target must mark a Stress when they fail an action roll.

Healing Skin - Reaction: When the Eeligator is spotlighted, you can mark **2 Stress** to clear a HP.

Eeligator #1	**Eeligator #3**
HP: ○ ○ ○ ○ Stress: ○ ○ ○	HP: ○ ○ ○ ○ Stress: ○ ○ ○
Eeligator #2	**Eeligator #4**
HP: ○ ○ ○ ○ Stress: ○ ○ ○	HP: ○ ○ ○ ○ Stress: ○ ○ ○

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LUCENT PURSUIT

ACT THREE

LUCENT RIVER RAPIDS

After everyone finishes their short rest, have each player describe one sign that the Brambleheart has been through this stretch of the river, such as dead fish, mutated animals peering out from the underbrush, or wilted foliage turning into ash. Then read the following text aloud:

Your journey downstream grants you a peaceful, if uneasy, rest until you come to a fork in the river with a sign pointing toward Highfall. It's obvious the thieves went that way.

You steer the craymeleons down that route. The river narrows and the current quickens. Looking ahead, you see increasingly harsh rapids and large, sharp rocks jutting up from the riverbed like broken teeth.

The water is as beautiful as it is dangerous, the luminous river becoming a kaleidoscope of blue and green as it churns around you.

Then... you see the eyes. Dozens of eyes peeking above the waves and vibrantly reflecting the moonlight. You know that these are eeligators—part eel, part gator, all hunger.

SLAM! The boat's keel is rocked hard by an eeligator as—SLAM!—it's hit again! Looking over the side, you see the slender, scaly body of a full-grown eeligator moving quickly beneath the vessel.

The predator erupts from the water and lunges at you! It crashes down on the boat, tipping it. Glowing water sloshes over the edge as you careen through the powerful river rapids, surrounded by hungry predators and sharp rocks as an eeligator climbs aboard!

Set up the boat, terrain, and PC minis at the center of the table, placing an eeligator standee on whichever side of the boat puts it near the most PCs.

ENCOUNTER GUIDE

In this encounter, the party must survive the rapids by navigating their boat around the obstacles (see the "Lucent River Rapids" environment) while monstrous eeligators climb aboard.

The boat the party chose affects how quickly and easily they get through obstacles, how much damage the boat can take before breaking apart, and how easily it capsizes. It also determines how much the PCs can move around while fighting the eeligators: the skiff is much smaller, while the pontoon boat's deck has room to move around.

Activate the environment's **River Run Countdown** by placing a die where the players can see it. Set the die to 6 if they are in the pontoon boat or 7 if they are in the skiff.

Then activate the environment's **Boat Hull Countdown** by placing another die near the party's boat. Set the die to 4 for the pontoon boat or 5 for the skiff.

These countdowns represent the party's attempt to navigate the rapids before their boat is destroyed. If the River Run countdown triggers first, they make it safely. If the Boat Hull countdown triggers first, the boat breaks. If you have a token of Fear, spend it early to put the party on the back foot with the environment's **"Dangerous Waters"** action.

The encounter begins with one **Eeligator** on board. Remember that you can spend Fear not only to activate an environment or adversary's features, but also to summon additional adversaries or make other GM moves. A single Eeligator is easy to manage, but if several of them climb on board, their **"Feeding Frenzy"** action can be dangerous.

Allow the players to make action rolls against an Eeligator's Difficulty (13) to knock them off the boat instead of killing them. The Lucent River Rapids stat block additionally includes benchmarks for the Difficulty and damage of hazards you invent on the fly. When either countdown triggers, move on to "The Drop."

Lucent Eeligator

Tier 2 Skulk

Description: *A long, serpentine hybrid with a scaly hide and powerful jaws*
Motives & Tactics: *Hide, hunt, pull them into the water*
Experience: *Aquatic +3*

Bite: Melee | 2d8+4 phy
ATK: +3
Difficulty: 13

Thresholds: 10/17
HP: 4
Stress: 3

FEATURES

Feeding Frenzy - Action: **Spend a Fear** to have up to three Eeligators within Very Close range of a target move into Melee range with that target and make a standard attack. Each Eeligator makes their own attack roll. If any attacks succeed, combine their damage.

Death Grip - Reaction: When the Eeligator makes a successful standard attack, you can **mark a Stress** to lock their jaw onto the target. The target marks an additional HP and is *Restrained* until the Eeligator is dealt Major damage or makes a standard attack against a different target. A *Restrained* target must mark a Stress when they fail an action roll.

Healing Skin - Reaction: When the Eeligator is spotlighted, you can spend **2 Stress** to clear a HP.

Eeligator #1 HP: ○ ○ ○ ○ Stress: ○ ○ ○
Eeligator #2 HP: ○ ○ ○ ○ Stress: ○ ○ ○
Eeligator #3 HP: ○ ○ ○ ○ Stress: ○ ○ ○
Eeligator #4 HP: ○ ○ ○ ○ Stress: ○ ○ ○

THE DROP

When the party clears the rapids, read the following text aloud:

Leaving the eeligators' hunting ground, a thunderous cacophony of crashing water rises off the riverbank. The rounding bend reveals the source of the sound: a few hundred feet ahead, the river drops off into open sky. It's a waterfall! What do you want to do?

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ENVIRONMENT FEATURE

Environments often have unique features that let you use them in unique ways. For this encounter, you have an environment called the Lucent River Rapids.

Lucent River Rapids

Tier 2 Traversal
Description: *Try to survive the rapids as predators swarm the boat.*
Impulses: *Capsize, drown, smash on rocks, tangle in vines*
Difficulty: 14

FEATURES

River Run - Passive: Navigating the rapids requires a River Run Countdown with a value of 9 if the party is on the pontoon boat or 7 if they're in the skiff. It ticks down when the GM takes the spotlight. You can tick down this countdown without taking the spotlight to gain a Fear. When the countdown triggers, the party arrives safely through the rapids.

What does the party see along the shoreline? What strange formations do the rocks in this river have? How do the craymeleons react to the rapids?

Boat Hull - Passive: The integrity of the party's boat while navigating the rapids is represented by a Boat Hull Countdown, which starts with a value of 7 if the party is on the pontoon boat or 5 if they're in the skiff. It ticks down when the boat takes damage. When it triggers, the boat breaks apart and each PC takes Severe damage (which can be reduced to Major damage by marking an Armor Slot).

What about the party's boat is particularly suited or unsuited to these rapids? Is there any way to strengthen the boat's integrity?

Dangerous Waters - Action: Roll a **d6** and introduce the corresponding obstacle. You can **spend a Fear** to choose an option instead of rolling.

1. The boat takes damage as it gets tangled in some riverweed or runs aground. Until the boat is freed from this obstacle, don't tick down the River Run Countdown.
2. One of the PCs goes overboard and takes **2d8+4** physical damage from the rocks. Until that PC is back in the boat, they have disadvantage on action rolls and must mark a Stress whenever they roll with Fear.
3. An Eeligator climbs aboard the boat. Immediately spotlight them.
4. An item or consumable from a PC's inventory falls overboard and begins sinking into the river. If you have previously rolled or chosen this obstacle, introduce option 5 instead.
5. The boat careens toward a rock. If a PC doesn't intervene, the boat crashes into the rock and the Boat Hull Countdown ticks down. A PC can pilot the boat to try and avoid the damage. That PC must succeed on an Agility Reaction Roll. On a failure, they mark a Stress and the Boat Hull Countdown ticks down twice.
6. The Eeligators slam into the boat, trying to capsize it. Roll a **d4**. If the result is higher than the current value of the Boat Hull Countdown, the boat flips over and each PC must succeed on a Strength Reaction Roll or take **2d12** physical damage as the boat capsizes. If the result is lower than the current value of the Boat Hull Countdown, tick down the countdown.

What other hazards might the party encounter? How do those obstacles highlight what the PCs are good at? What happens to the craymeleons?

THE DROP

When the party clears the rapids, capsizes, or crashes, read the following text aloud:

> *Leaving the eeligators' hunting grounds, you hear the thunderous cacophony of crashing water reverberating off the riverbank. The rounding of the next bend reveals the source of the sound: a few hundred feet ahead, the river drops off into open sky. You're headed toward a huge waterfall! What do you want to do?*

Ask the players how they work together to reach the riverbank in time. Unless rescued by the rest of the party, any PC not in the boat must make an action roll to avoid the drop-off. On a success with Fear, they must mark a Stress. On a failure, they go over the falls and take Severe damage.

SEARCHING THE RIVERBANK

If the players search for Hergl and Lika's boat, they find that the thieves pulled it onto the shore and hastily hid it underneath some brush before breaking the boom chain that served as the waterfall's only safety measure.

With a successful **Instinct Roll (13)**, a PC can find muddy footprints leading from the boat to the cliff's edge, where Lika and Hergl tied off a rope and rappelled down two hundred or so feet to the bottom of the falls.

The rope has a hex on it that shocks anyone who touches it, forcing them to mark a Stress and throwing them perilously close to the cliff's edge. A PC can discover this hex in advance with a successful **Spellcast Roll (13)**.

Encourage the players to find their way down the cliffside using their tools or abilities.

THE SECRET OF THE FALLS

At the base of the cliff next to the High Falls, the PCs must explore the area to uncover the thieves' trail.

They can discover:

- **One set of messy footprints leads into the forest**, but they stop only a few steps in. When examined closely, it's clear that someone walked forward, then attempted to walk backward in their own footprints to disguise their path.
- **There is a viscous black liquid** on the ground near the coiled end of the thieves' rope. The moss and lichens near it are gray and ashy.
- **Investigating the area reveals a hidden alcove behind the waterfall.** When the PCs enter the alcove they find the entrance to an ancient network of cave tunnels.
- **Mystical runes are carved around the tunnel entrance.** A PC can read them with a successful **Knowledge Roll (14)**: *"Beyond this portal lies the final resting place of the King of Ash and Ember."*

When the party heads into the hidden cave behind the waterfall, move to Act Four.

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INTO THE CAVE

ACT FOUR// PART ONE

THE CAVE DESCENT

When the party walks into the cave tunnels, read the following text aloud:

> *You pass through the mouth of the cave and into a maze of tunnels lit by strange mineral veins that glow like coals in a crucible.*

As the party moves deeper into the caves, they notice splashes of thick black liquid on the walls or floor every hundred feet or so. Ask a player what kind of small hybrid creature they notice investigating or consuming this liquid, then describe that creature becoming frightened by the party's presence and escaping down the path.

Note this creature's name, as you'll use it later in this adventure. As the PCs continue forward, read the following text aloud:

> *It's not clear how long you travel—it could be thirty minutes or three hours. Time seems to move differently here.*
>
> *These caves were once inhabited, and occasionally you hear the soft clatter of a party member's foot knocking aside discarded trinkets or ancient bones. What interesting or unexpected stretches of the cave do you pass through on your journey?*

Let every player contribute a description of their journey through these caves. If they have trouble coming up with ideas, you can use the optional questions below or create your own prompts.

OPTIONAL QUESTIONS

You find a mysterious statue carved from the cave's natural stone. What about it fills you with dread?

You pass through an area that doesn't even appear to be underground anymore, despite you knowing it is. What does it look like?

You find the remains of other travelers who died here long ago. What seems to have killed them?

Once everybody has had a chance to contribute, describe the last strange thing they hear: distant cries of pain, like an animal caught in a trap.

When the party investigates, they find Lika doubled over in a puddle of the same black liquid. Ask the players how they know with a single look that Lika is dying from her prolonged exposure to the Brambleheart.

Lika is frightened of the party but in too much pain to move. She's attempting to heal herself with a sableberry salve, but it's not working.

Lika can reveal the following information:

- **Hergl is a member of the Firewatch**, a faction from a settlement called Refuge.
- **The Firewatch regularly burns back the Sablewood** because it's slowly growing into Refuge's territory.
- **Hergl was blackmailed into stealing the Brambleheart by the Firewatch leadership**, who kidnapped his wife. Lika agreed to help Hergl because she owed him a life debt from their childhood.
- **Hergl was ordered to use the Brambleheart to resurrect the Soot King**, a tyrant sorcerer from the Earliest Age who once nearly destroyed the Sablewood. Hergl's gone ahead to finish the job.
- **Lika didn't originally know why the Firewatch wanted the Brambleheart.** She is terrified of the Soot King and regrets her role in his resurrection.

If the party attempts to recruit Lika to their cause, they must succeed on a **Presence Roll (16)**. On a success, Lika can use the Help an Ally action once per PC without spending Hope. When the party finishes speaking with Lika, move to the next part of Act Four.

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INTO THE CAVE

ACT FOUR// PART TWO

THE SOOT KING

Read the following text aloud:

> *You follow Lika's directions to the Soot King's tomb. Suddenly, the walls vibrate and hum. The air grows heavy. A fetid gust of wind howls through the tunnel, knocking you forward through the opening and into a massive open cavern. White soot and black ash rain down on you.*
>
> *At the far end of this chamber, you see an ancient, decadent throne carved from the same veined, glowing mineral as the tunnel walls. A figure who looks like a charred human corpse sits upon the throne. Hergl stands over it, holding the Brambleheart aloft. His skin is peeling and cracking, turning to ash. Before you can stop him, he plunges the Brambleheart into the corpse's chest.*
>
> *The Brambleheart beats to life, growing barbs into the corpse's chest cavity. In an instant, the corpse's hand is at Hergl's throat. He struggles against it, but crumbles into ash as his life essence is drawn out through the corpse's arm and into its beating Brambleheart.*
>
> *The charred figure steps through the gray cloud that used to be Hergl. He's now 20 feet tall, wearing a crown of twisted, burning bramble. His face is gray, eyes black, mouth full of rows upon rows of toothlike thorns. This is the Soot King.*
>
> *The Brambleheart pulses loudly within his chest, shaking the room around you as four inhumanly tall Soot Soldiers rise from the ankle-deep ashfall to serve their ruler.*

Place terrain and standees on the table, with the Soot King on the side of the chamber nearest you, the PCs standing in the center, and the four Soot Soldiers encircling them. Then ask the players what they want to do.

Use the encounter guide on this page and the stat blocks on the next page to run the fight.

ENCOUNTER GUIDE

The Soot King advances on the party and attacks with his sword. If the PCs try to keep their distance, he uses his **"Burning Heart"** action, which can hit multiple PCs at range. Use his **"Binding Grasp"** action early in the encounter to establish how dangerous he is. If a PC attacks him while he's charging his "Burning Heart," use his **"Weak Point"** reaction and describe how the attack weakens and enrages him, shifting his stats.

The four **Soot Soldiers** prevent the combat from becoming a simple slugfest. They should prioritize protecting the Soot King, using their **"Devotee"** reaction whenever they can unless the PCs are rolling poorly or taking too much damage.

When the Soot King marks half or more of his Hit Points, he summons a number of **Decaying Cave Creatures** equal to 2 + the number of PCs. Their introduction shakes up the combat after the PCs have learned what the King and his Soldiers are capable of. Describe them as larger, decaying versions of the creature whose name you recorded in the first part of Act Four. The small animal the party previously encountered was a baby, and these are the corroded adults of its kind.

Because the Decaying Cave Creatures are minions, the PCs should have little trouble dispatching them—but their **Group Attack** feature allows them to deal significant damage if the party ignores them to focus on the boss.

ABOUT THE SOOT KING

The Soot King is the ashen form of King Melichor, a ruthless tyrant from the Earliest Age whose heartless court mages twisted normal animal forms into experimental hybrid creatures. When he began experimenting on sentient beings, in particular the faeries of the Sablewood, the people of the forest rose up. In an effort to quash these uprisings, he began burning the Sablewood and its inhabitants. After vast destruction and violence, he was finally immolated by a powerful faerie wizard, who later took the title of the first Whitefire Arcanist.

Revived by the power of the Brambleheart, the Soot King's goal is to destroy those who stand in his way, escape the caves, and burn down every inch of the Sablewood.

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Soot King

Tier 2 Leader

Description: *A towering tyrant king formed from embers and ash. The Brambleheart beats in his chest, visible through the gaps in his charred carapace.*

Motives & Tactics: *Burn foes, feed followers, stoke destruction*

Embral Blade: Close | 2d12+4 mag
ATK: +5
Difficulty: 15

Thresholds: 14/27
HP: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Stress: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

FEATURES

Relentless (2+X) - Passive: The Soot King can be spotlighted up to two + X times per GM turn, where X is the number of *Branded* PCs in the scene. Spend Fear as usual to spotlight them.

Weak Point - Passive: The Soot King takes double damage from successful attacks made by PCs while his Burning Heart Countdown is active. After taking damage in this way, the Soot King gains a permanent −1 penalty to his Difficulty and **+1d6** bonus to his standard attack damage. Describe how this changes the Soot King's actions, appearance, or demeanor.

Binding Grasp - Action: **Mark a Stress** to make an attack with a +5 bonus to the attack roll against a target within sight. On a success, the target is magically pulled into Melee range with the Soot King, who lifts them by the neck, deals **2d20** direct physical damage, then drops them. The target's neck is ringed in burned flesh, *Branding* them until their next long rest. The Soot King can't use this action against a *Branded* target.

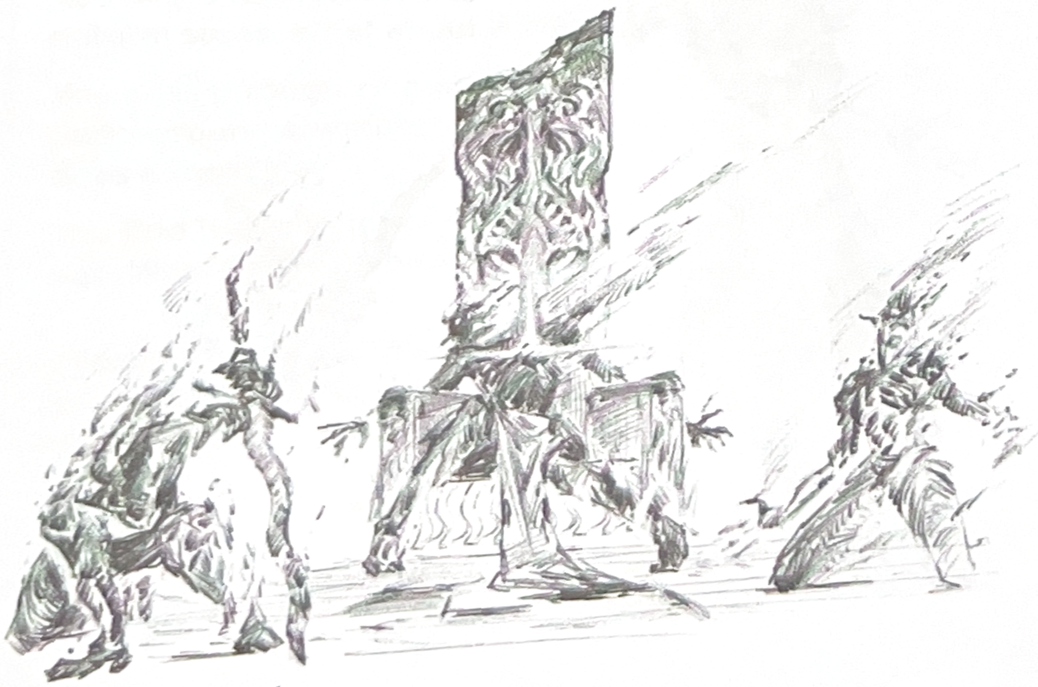
Burning Heart - Action: *Countdown (2).* Activate this countdown as the Soot King opens his chest and exposes the Brambleheart, which glows with malevolent flame. It ticks down when a PC makes an action roll. When it triggers, immediately spotlight the Soot King, who unleashes a searing beam at any number of targets in a line. All targets take **2d10+4** magic damage, then the spotlight returns to the PCs.

Arise, Minions! - Reaction: When the Soot King has marked half or more of his HP, summon a number of Decaying Cave Creatures equal to 3 + the number of PCs in the scene. The Decaying Cave Creatures appear within Close range.

> **Direct Damage**
>
> Direct damage is physical or magic damage that Armor Slots can't be used to reduce.

THE KING IS DEAD

When the Soot King is defeated, he stumbles toward his throne before collapsing into a cloud of dust and ash and leaving behind only the Brambleheart, which lies pulsating on the ground. Any remaining Soldiers crumble away, and any remaining Cave Creatures flee.



Decaying Cave Creature

Tier 2 Minion

Description: *Cave creatures with decaying skin.*
Motives & Tactics: *Drink blood, eat flesh, hide in darkness*

Teeth & Claws: Melee | 6 phy
ATK: +0
Difficulty: 12

Thresholds: none
HP: 1
Stress: 1

FEATURES

Minion (6) - Passive: The Cave Creature is defeated when they take any damage. For every 6 damage a PC deals to the Cave Creature, defeat an additional Minion within range the attack would succeed against.

Group Attack - Action: **Spend a Fear** to choose a target and spotlight all Cave Creatures within Close range of them. Those Minions move into Melee range of the target and make one shared attack roll. On a success, they deal 6 physical damage each. Combine this damage.

Creature #1 HP: ○ Stress: ○
Creature #2 HP: ○ Stress: ○
Creature #3 HP: ○ Stress: ○
Creature #4 HP: ○ Stress: ○
Creature #5 HP: ○ Stress: ○
Creature #6 HP: ○ Stress: ○
Creature #7 HP: ○ Stress: ○
Creature #8 HP: ○ Stress: ○

Soot Soldier

Tier 2 Standard

Description: *A foot soldier made of ash carrying a two-handed claymore.*
Motives & Tactics: *Grow taller, protect the king, reconfigure*

Claymore: Melee | 2d8+2 phy
ATK: +3
Difficulty: 13

Thresholds: 9/18
HP: 5
Stress: 3

FEATURES

Cult of Death - Action: **Mark a HP** to make a standard attack with advantage against any target within range. A target who marks HP from this attack must mark an additional HP.

Devotee - Reaction: When a PC makes a successful attack against the Soot King, you can **mark a Stress** to have the Soldier disintegrate into a cloud of ash, reform within Melee range of the attacker, and immediately make a standard attack against them.

Soot Soldier #1 HP: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Stress: ○ ○ ○
Soot Soldier #2 HP: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Stress: ○ ○ ○
Soot Soldier #3 HP: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Stress: ○ ○ ○
Soot Soldier #4 HP: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Stress: ○ ○ ○

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THE WAY BACK

RETURN TO THE SPIRE

...ome whether the party gets the Brambleheart back ...before Vaja dies, have the PCs make a group ... the PC carrying the Brambleheart is the leader.

...ch has the Spirestone Strongbox, they can ...the Brambleheart inside. Anyone carrying the ...without the Strongbox takes **2d10** magic ...they make an action roll.

...ding text aloud:

...time behind the falls to find that the desaturated ...cliff base has expanded out from the spatters ...cloud. Motes of dust drift through the first rays of ...sting to your clothing.

...you have you make a **Group Action Roll (16)** to ...the Sablewood back to the Spire. The person ...the Brambleheart will act as the leader, and we're ...describe the journey together.

...ver which trait they're using for the roll and how ...they traverse the forest. Allow yourself and the ...creative, using the following prompts if helpful.

...TIONAL QUESTIONS

...ing hybrid animal do you fight off during your ...? How are you able to protect the party from it? ...does it attack you?

...expected change has the Brambleheart ...in the forest? What do you notice that helps ...danger? OR How does it hinder your progress?

...of the Sablewood was particularly dangerous ...the Brambleheart warped it beyond ...tion. What does it look like now, and what trick do ...to keep the party survive? OR What does it look ...and how does it cause you to almost lose the ...ment?

...ounter another party on your way to the Spire. ...they say that scares you, and what comfort do ...them? OR What do they do that puts the party in ...?

...happens that makes you fear the party won't ...to the Spire with the Brambleheart? How do you ...it? OR How is your fear realized?

...ter a danger you've dealt with before. What ...are you able to use your knowledge to your ...? What is it, and why does it terrify you?

THE WAY BACK

ACT FIVE

RETURN TO THE SPIRE

To determine whether the party gets the Brambleheart back to the Spire before Vaya dies, have the PCs make a group action roll. The PC carrying the Brambleheart is the leader.

If the party still has the Spirestone Strongbox, they can safely carry the Brambleheart inside. Anyone carrying the Brambleheart without the Strongbox takes **2d10** magic damage whenever they make an action roll.

Read the following text aloud:

> You exit from behind the falls to find that the desaturated rot at the cliff base has expanded out from the spatters of black liquid. Motes of dust drift through the first rays of dawn and cling to your clothing.
>
> I'm going to have you make a **Group Action Roll (16)** to traverse the Sablewood back to the Spire. *The person carrying the Brambleheart will act as the leader, and we're going to describe the journey together.*

Ask each player which trait they're using for the roll and how it helps the party traverse the forest. Allow yourself and the players to get creative, using the following prompts if helpful.

OPTIONAL QUESTIONS

What decaying hybrid animal do you fight off during your journey? How are you able to protect the party from it? *OR* How does it attack you?

What unexpected change has the Brambleheart manifested in the forest? What do you notice that helps you avoid danger? *OR* How does it hinder your progress?

A portion of the Sablewood was particularly dangerous even before the Brambleheart warped it beyond recognition. What does it look like now, and what trick do you use to help the party survive? *OR* What does it look like now, and how does it cause you to almost lose the Brambleheart?

You encounter another party on your way to the Spire. What do they say that scares you, and what comfort do you offer them? *OR* What do they do that puts the party in danger?

What happens that makes you fear the party won't make it to the Spire with the Brambleheart? How do you overcome it? *OR* How is your fear realized?

You encounter a danger you've dealt with before. What is it, and how are you able to use your knowledge to your benefit? *OR* What is it, and why does it terrify you?

Once each player has described the journey and you've determined the result of the group roll, read the following text aloud:

> *Covered in dirt and blood, you finally come into the Spire clearing. The rot has expanded even further from the tower, and with every step, the fragile plants collapse into dust.*
>
> *You bear the heavy Brambleheart up the twisting stairs, your bodies exhausted by the climb. You look for Vaya next to the dying tree—and find him unmoving.*

If the party succeeded on the group roll, Vaya is alive when they arrive at the Spire, and he greets them with a wan smile. If the roll was with Hope, Vaya restores the Brambleheart to the crown of the Elder Tree. If the roll was with Fear, he exhausts the last of his energy to do so and perishes soon after—but not before thanking the party for saving the Sablewood.

If the party failed the group roll, Vaya is already dead when they arrive. If they rolled with Hope, a new Keeper arrives in time to save the Elder Tree. If they rolled with Fear, they're too late. The new Keeper thanks them for their efforts, but tearfully laments the loss of the Spire.

RESTORING THE BRAMBLEHEART

If Vaya is alive, read the following text aloud:

> *Vaya sits on the floor of the Spire, looking up at you all. His eyes are half-lidded with exhaustion, and he's aged decades in a single night. His face carries a weight that wasn't there before you left. "I cannot thank you enough for what you've done. With the Spire restored, the forest will heal. All who live in the Sablewood owe you a debt of gratitude."*

If Vaya is dead, read the following text aloud:

> *A letter lies next to Vaya's lifeless body.*
>
> *"My friends, if you're reading this, I'll assume that you returned to the Spire with the Brambleheart. I'm sorry I didn't have the strength to see it. All who live in the Sablewood owe you a debt of gratitude for your work, and I hope you'll consider the green leaves of the trees and the cheerful calls of the cat-squirrels as tokens of my eternal thanks. Another Spire Keeper will see my signal fire's absence and arrive here shortly to take my place. Or maybe one of you will stay behind and take up the mantle in my stead. The choice is yours. Thank you, adventurers."*

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BEYOND THE SPIRE

EPILOGUE

When it seems like the players have finished in the Spire, read the following text aloud:

You return to the faerie who sent you to the Spire: the Whitefire Arcanist. She greets you warmly, offering hot tea and comfortable lodging until the next morning.

"The Soot King was raised by a Brambleheart?" The Arcanist nervously clicks her tongue over the immaculate breakfast she laid before you. "I thought he was a foe for the history books." She stands suddenly, her moth antennae quivering tensely.

"For the Refuge to make such a move!" The old faerie turns to you. "It's a militant settlement on the eastern border of the Sablewood. They've long burned the edge of our forest. Trying to keep life from finding its verdant way... a disgusting practice..."

The Arcanist grumbles to herself and begins digging through the drawers of her cluttered home. She tosses out a colorful scarf, then a handful of acorns, the skull of a bird, and finally a delicate tea cup that somehow lands—full of blue liquid—on the table before you.

"I hate to ask you for more; you've already done so much to protect the Sablewood. But, I cannot in good conscience allow heroes of your caliber to leave these trees before I at least try. Not in these times.

"We're going to need reinforcements if the Refuge is making such bold attacks against us. Jerull—he's a brilliant arcane engineer in the Kinekozan Jags. He owes me a favor for—never mind." She laughs softly, turning back to you with a small pouch in her hand.

"If I contact Jerull, will you go speak to him on behalf of the Sablewood? Unfortunately, I can't leave while we're under threat."

She looks at each of you for a long moment, her massive insectoid eyes gleaming. Then she lets out a little shout of joy. "I know you can't resist an adventure!"

She drops a pinch of herbs from her pouch into the strange teacup and leans over the little dish. "Jerull! Before I say anything else, I want you to remember, you owe me..."

And that's where we're going to end today's session

BEYOND THE ADVENTURE

Congratulations, you've completed *The Dying Spire*! For more, visit **www.daggerheart.com** to purchase the full game and join our community.

THE DYING SPIRE CREDITS

Designers
Carlos Cisco, Rowan Hall, Rob Hebert, and Spenser Starke

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Layout
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THE DYING SPIRE INSPIRATION

TTRPGs
Dungeons & Dragons by Wizards of the Coast
Pathfinder by Paizo
For the Queen by Alex Roberts
Lady Blackbird by John Harper
The Wildsea by Felix Isaacs

Books
The *Dragonlance* series by Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman
The Lord of the Rings series by J. R. R. Tolkien
The *Southern Reach Series* by Jeff VanderMeer
The Wheel of Time series by Robert Jordan
Twig by Skottie Young and Kyle Strahm

TV & Film
Avatar: The Last Airbender created by Michael Dante DiMartino & Bryan Konietzko
Castle in the Sky written and directed by Hayao Miyazaki
The Dark Crystal directed by Jim Henson and Frank Oz
Fern Gully: The Last Rainforest directed by Bill Kroyer
Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind written and directed by Hayao Miyazaki
The River Wild directed by Curtis Hanson

For a full list of credits and inspirations for Daggerheart, see the core rulebook.

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THE DYING SPIRE

STANDEES & TERRAIN

Goathog #1

Goathog #1

Goathog #2

Goathog #2

Goathog #3

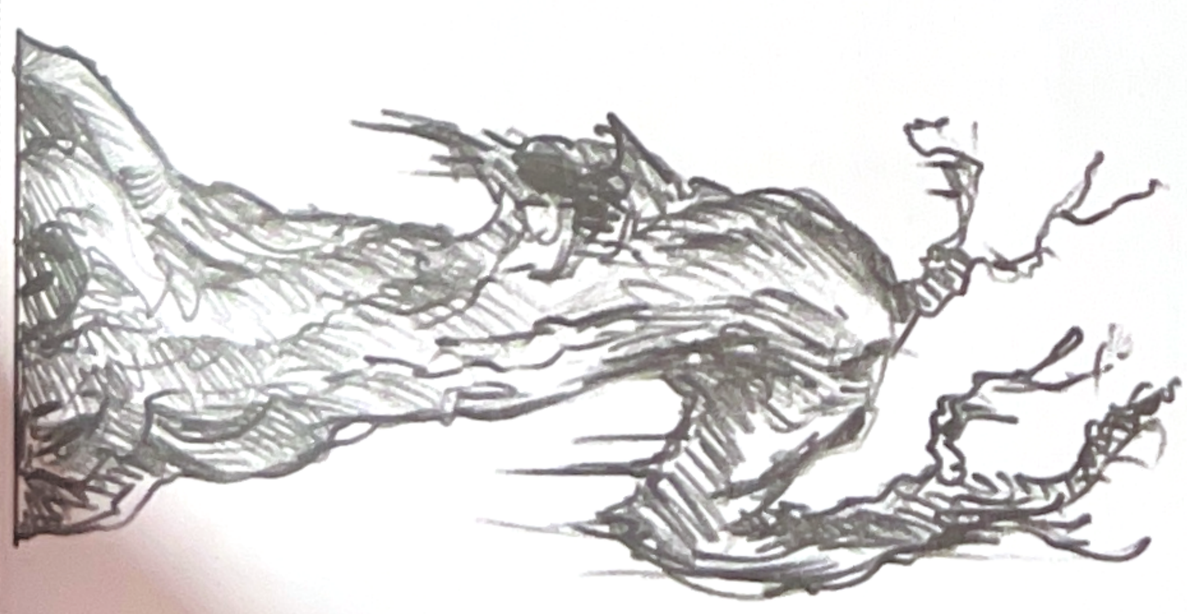
Goathog #3

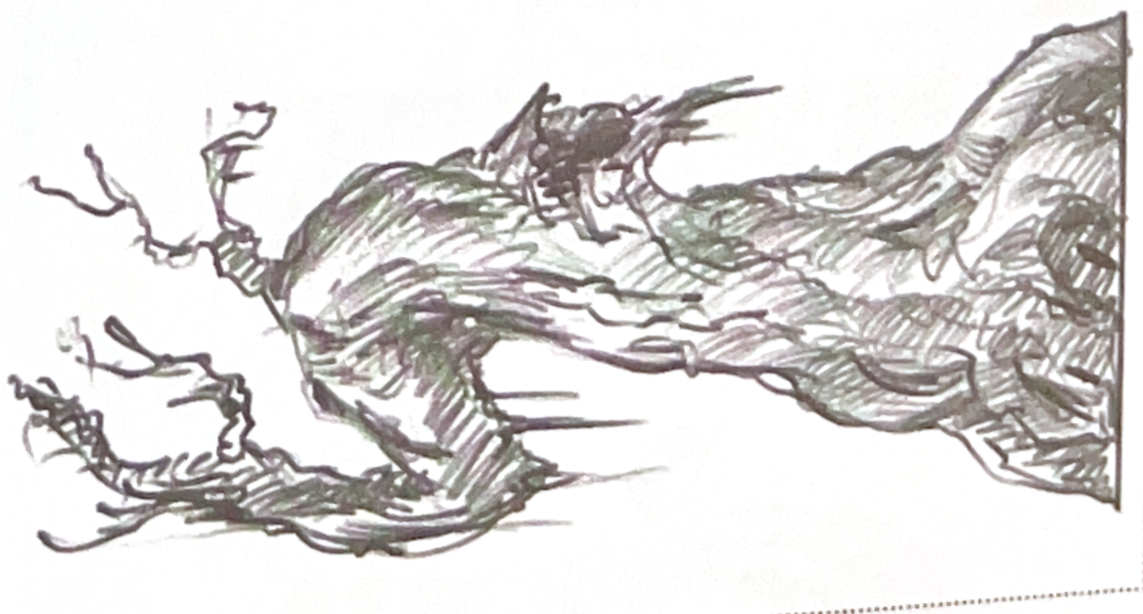
Goathog #4

Goathog #4

Goathog #5

Goathog #5





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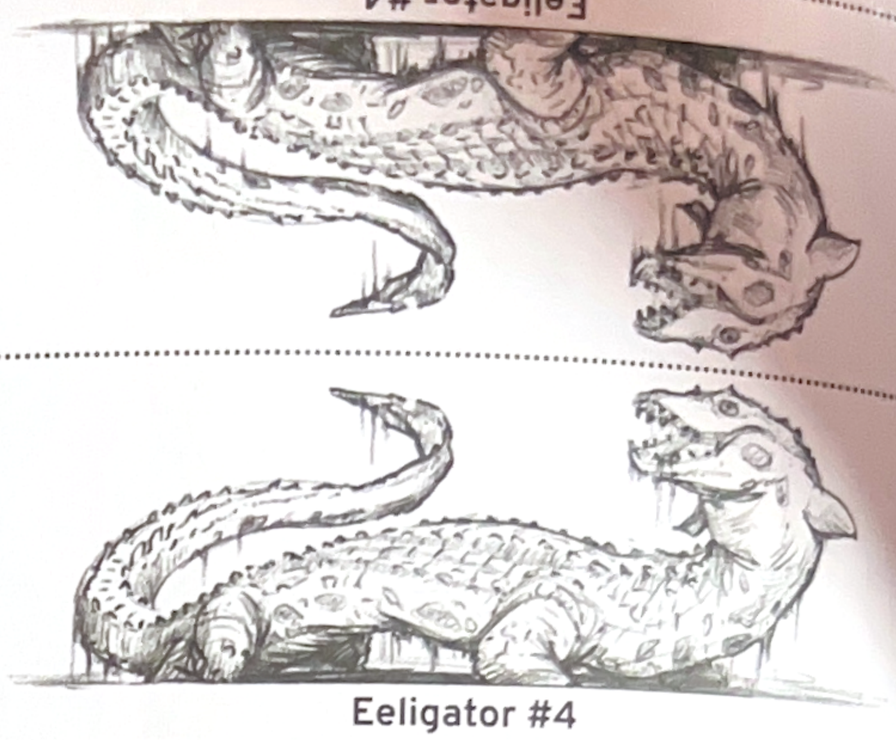
Eeligator #4



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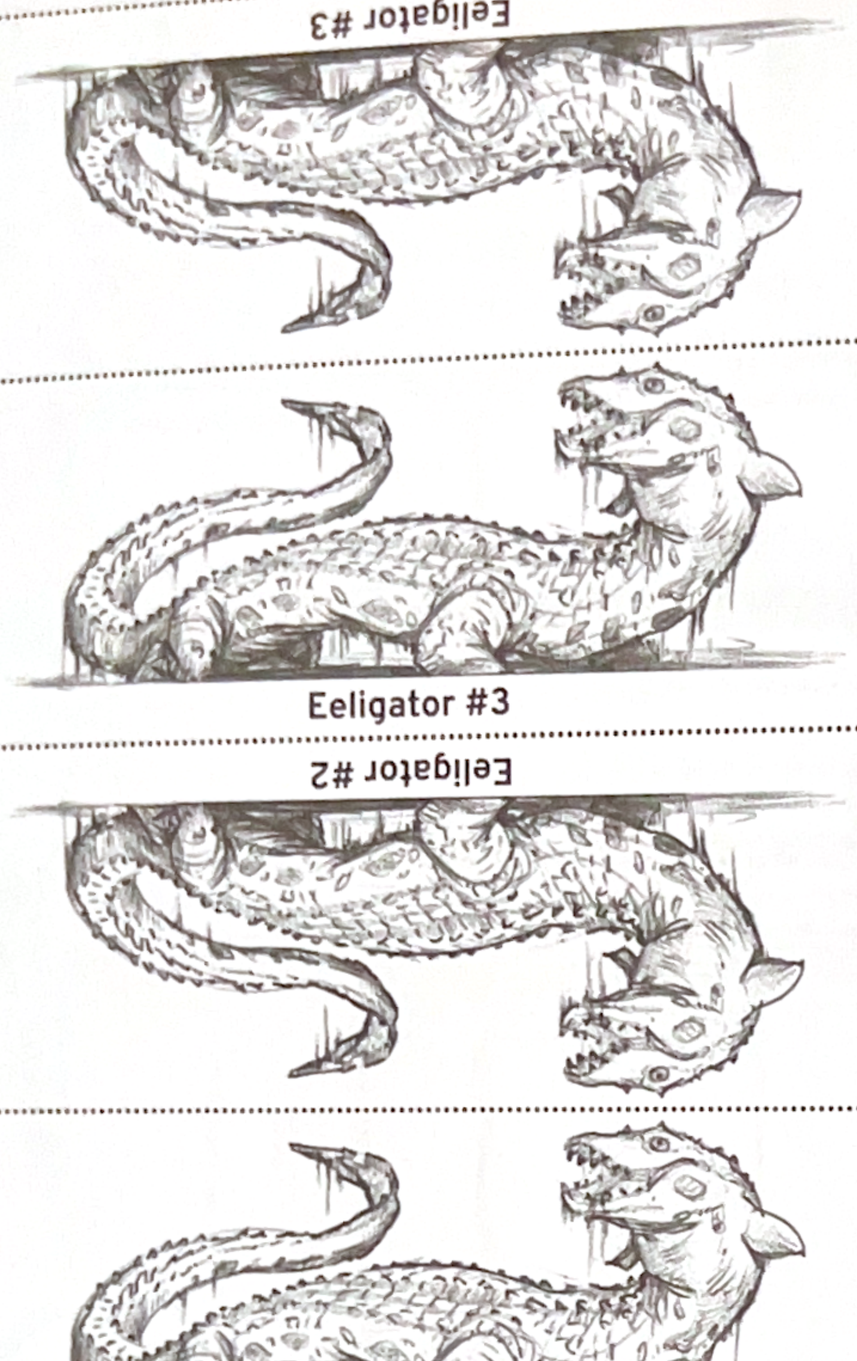

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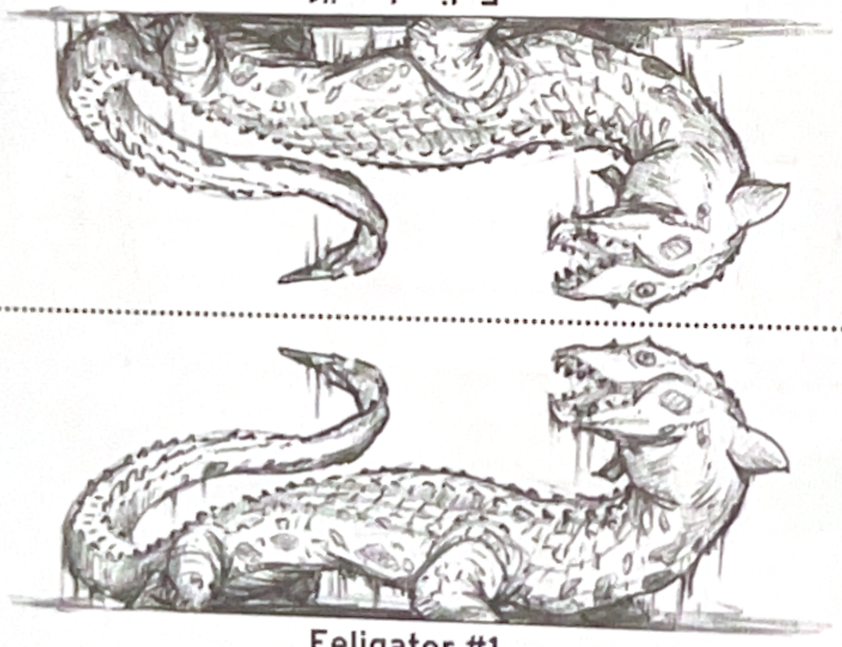
Eeligator #1

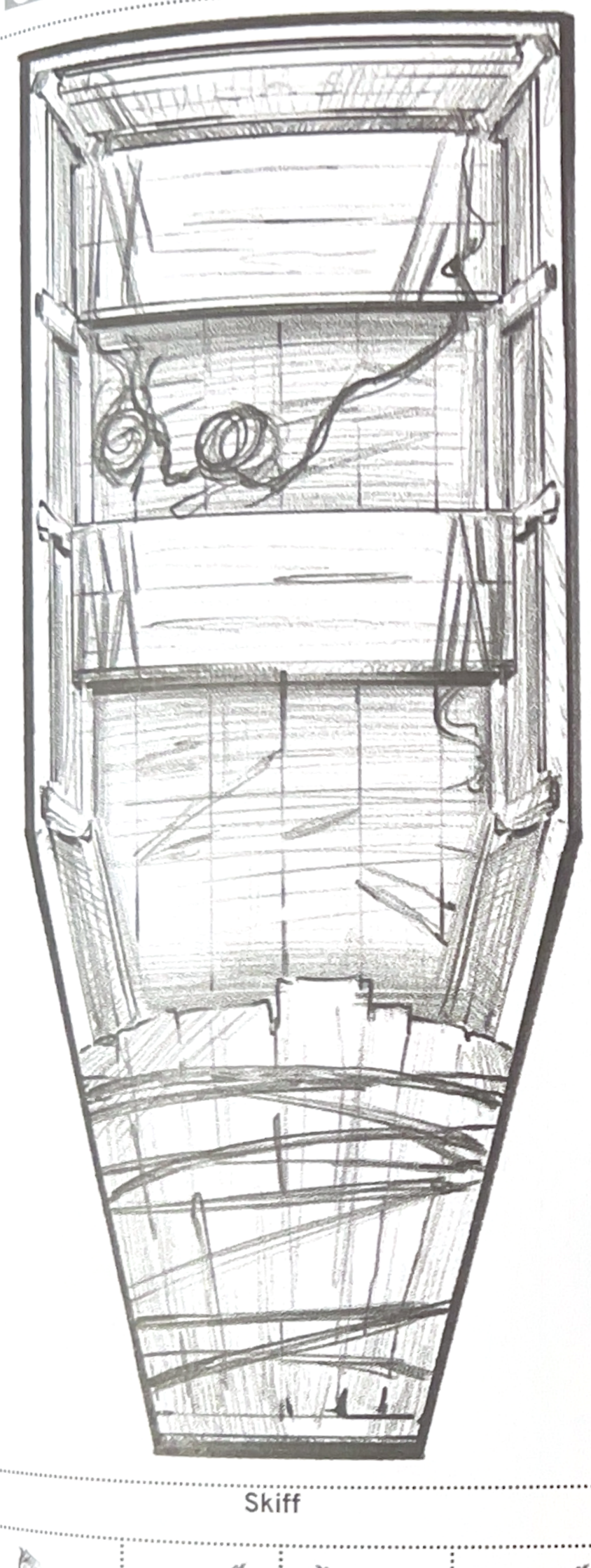


Eeligator #1

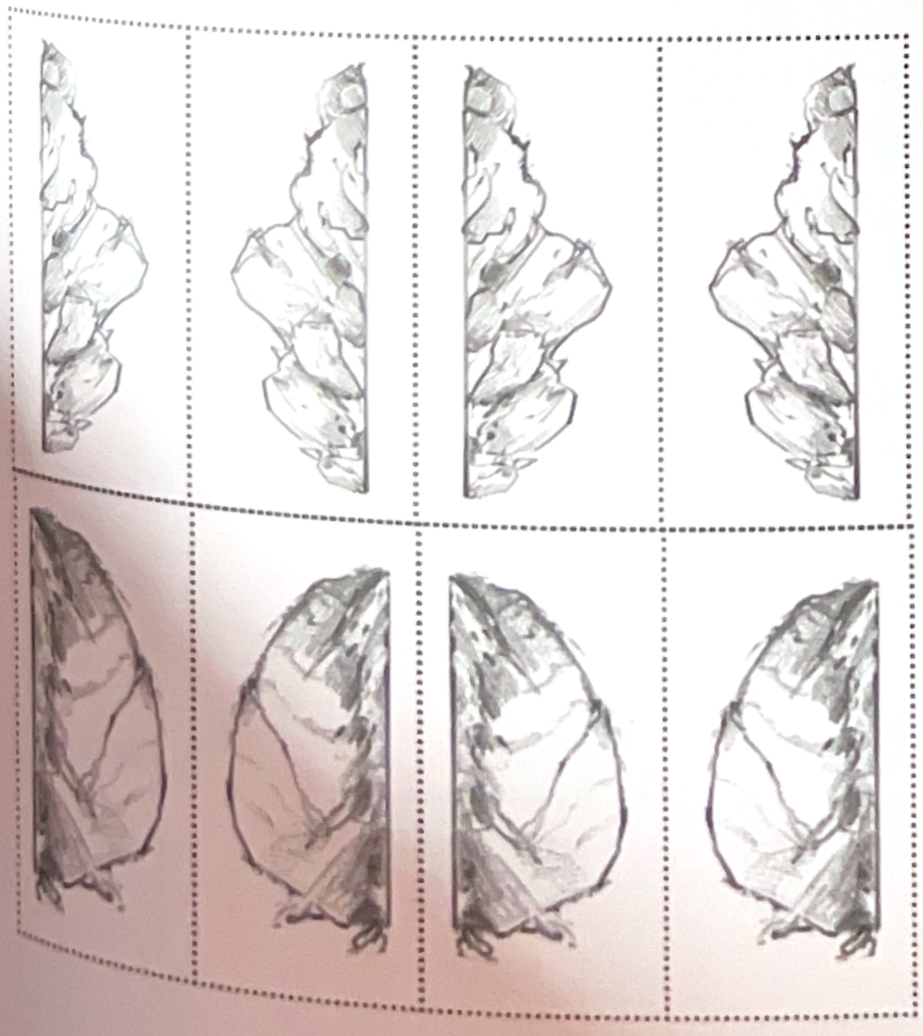
Eeligator #4

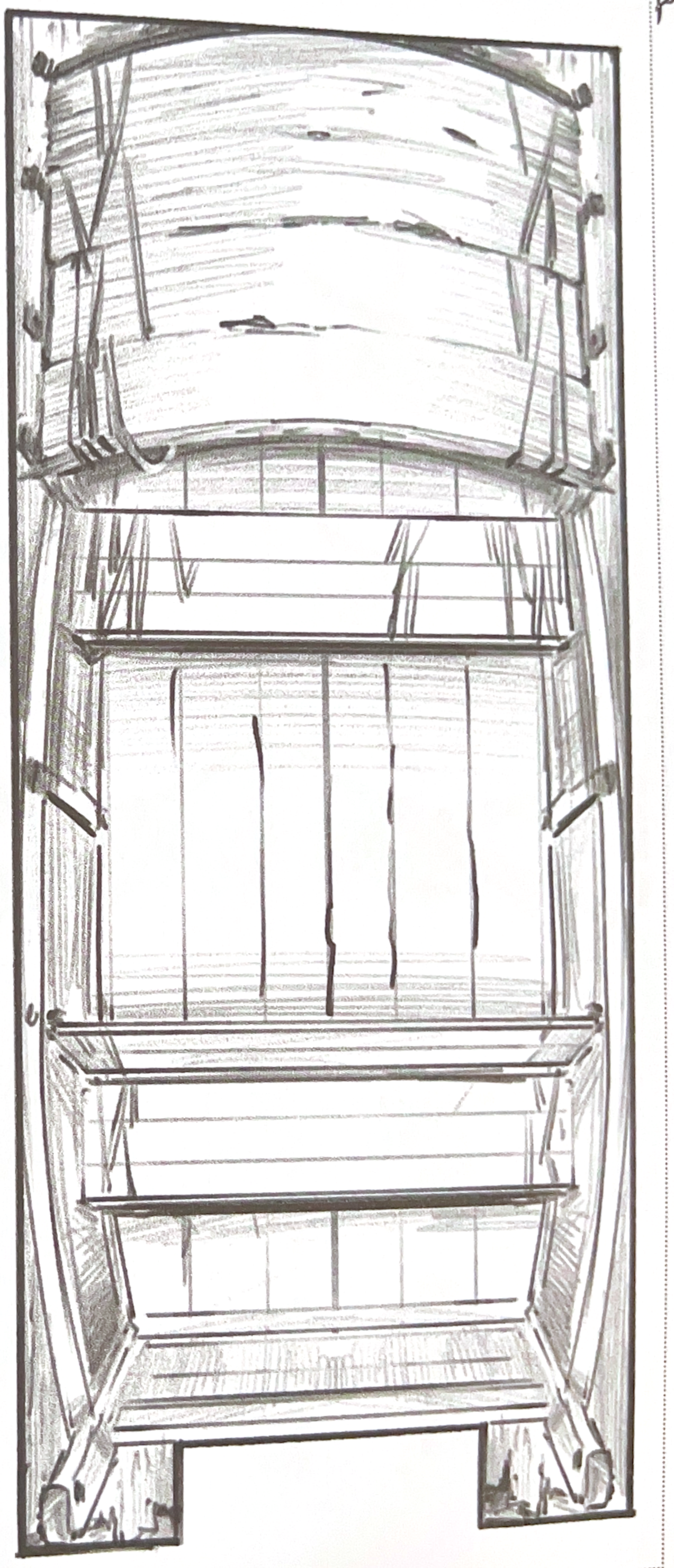
THE DYING SPIRE

STANDEES & TERRAIN



Skiff





Pontoon

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THE DYING SPIRE

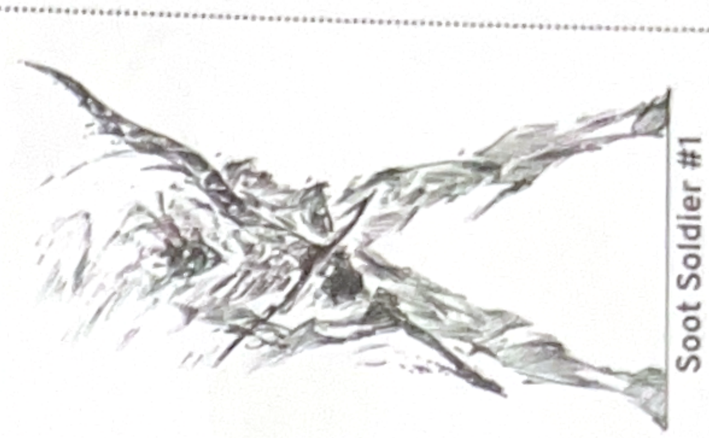
STANDEES & TERRAIN

Soot King

Soot King

Soot Soldier #1

Soot Soldier #1



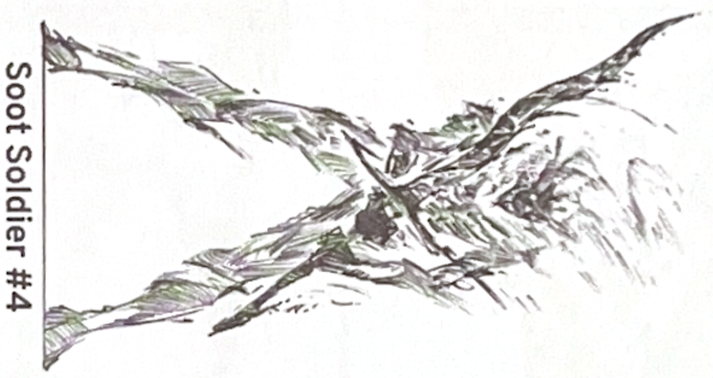
Soot Soldier #2

Soot Soldier #2

Soot Soldier #3

Soot Soldier #3

Soot Soldier #4



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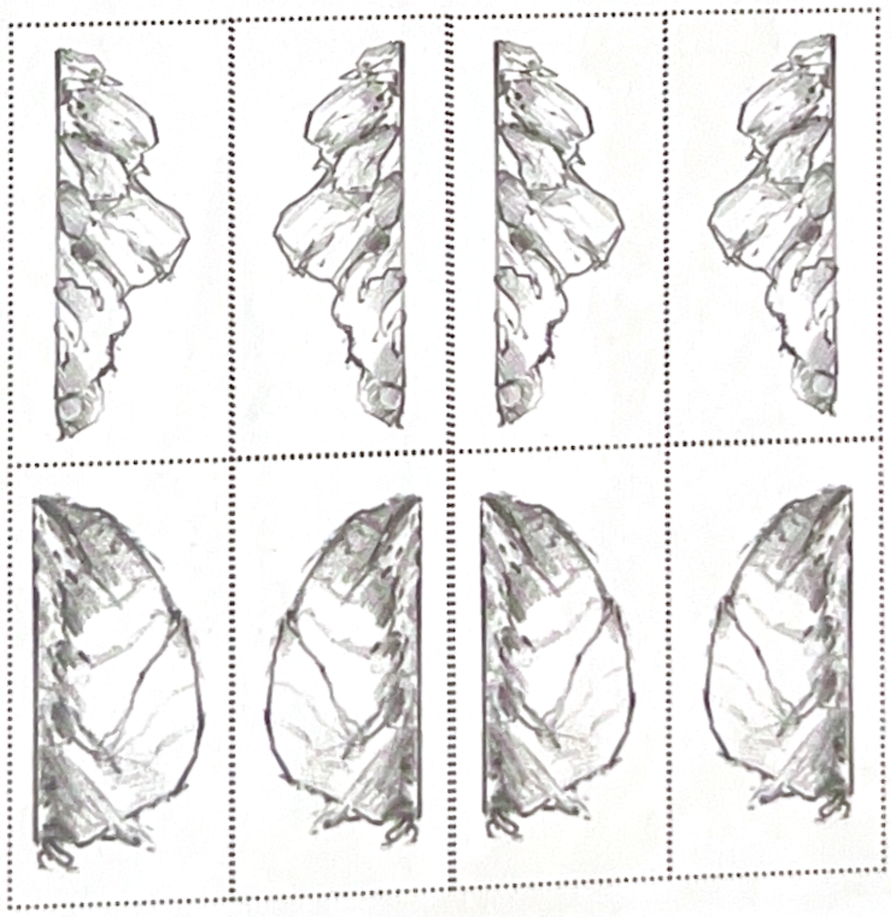

Cave Creature #1

Cave Creature #1

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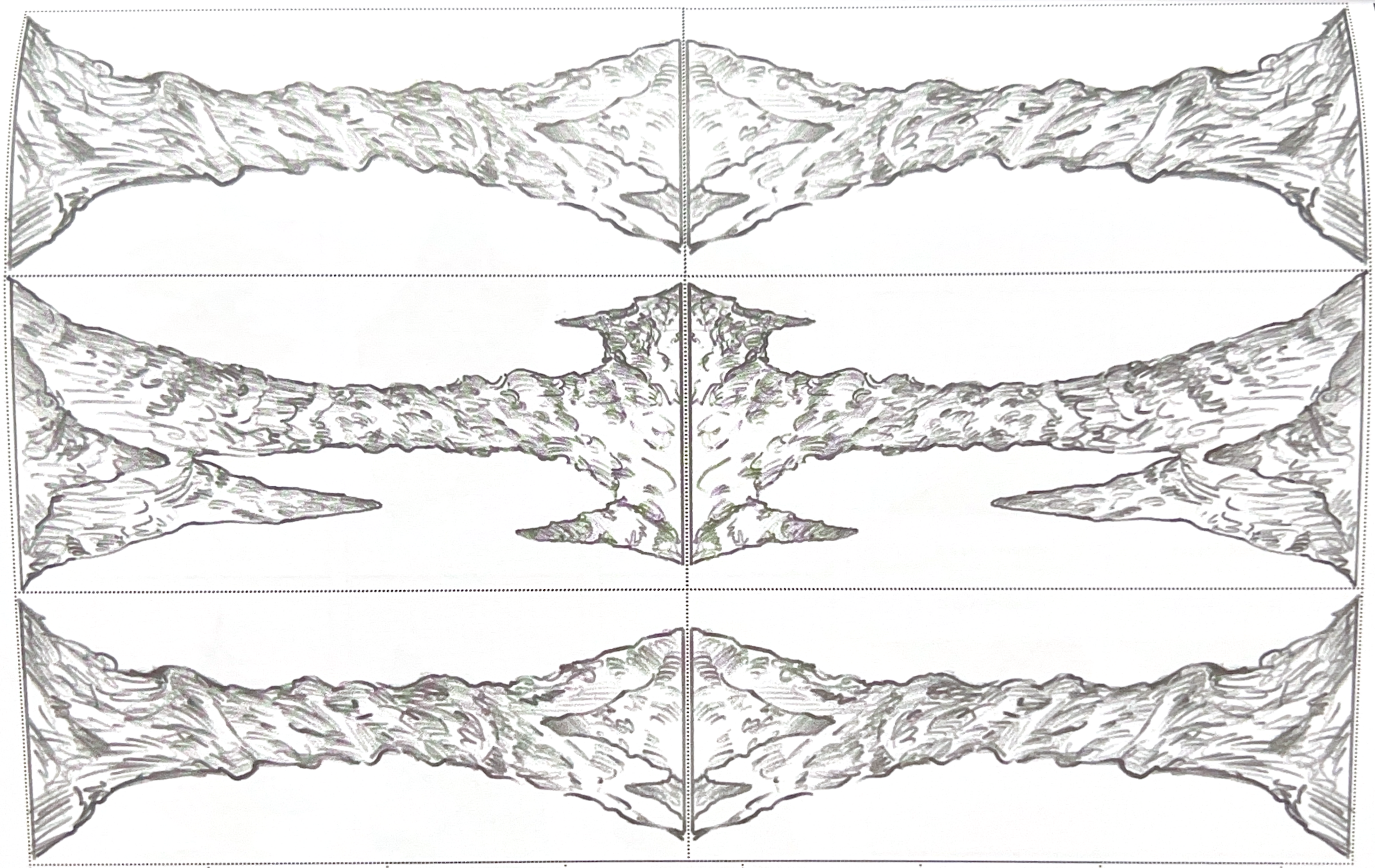

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THE DYING SPIRE

STANDEES & TERRAIN

Forest Terrain

Forest Terrain

Forest Terrain

Forest Terrain

Forest Terrain

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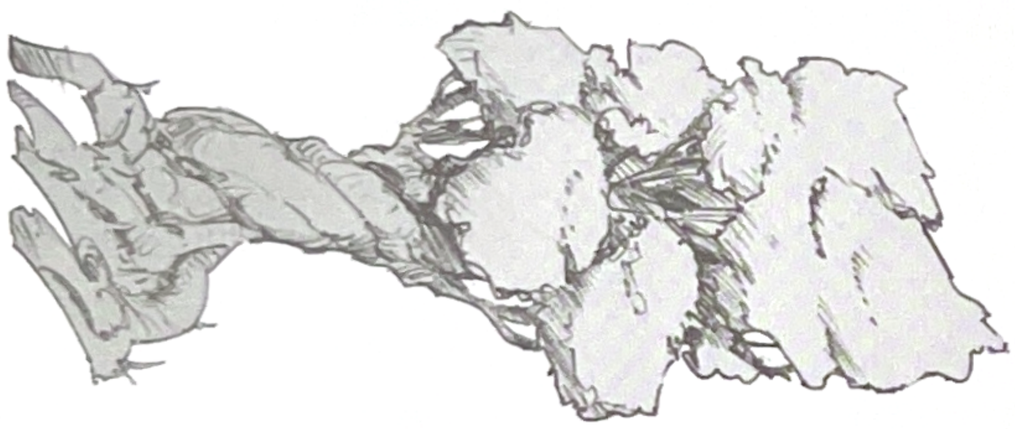
Forest Terrain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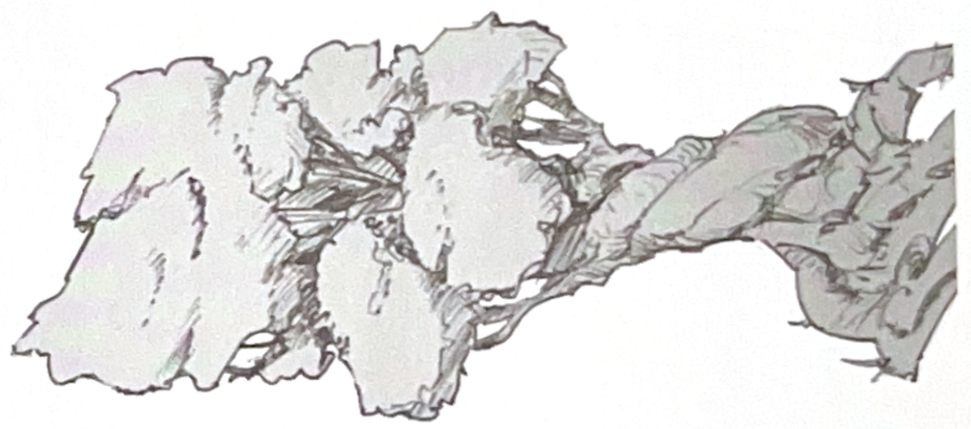
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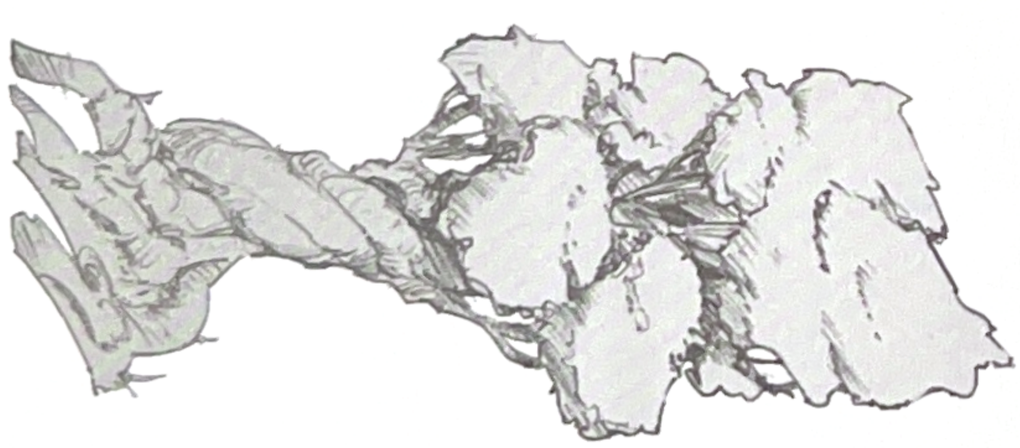
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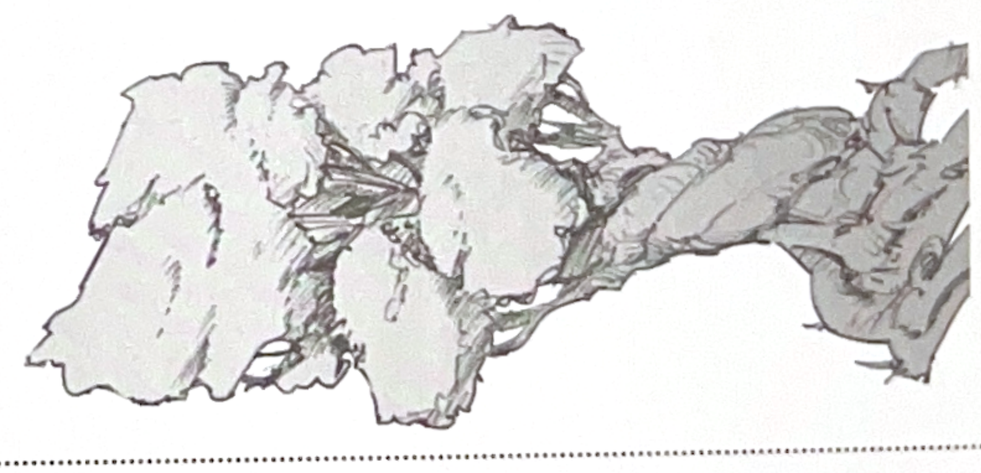
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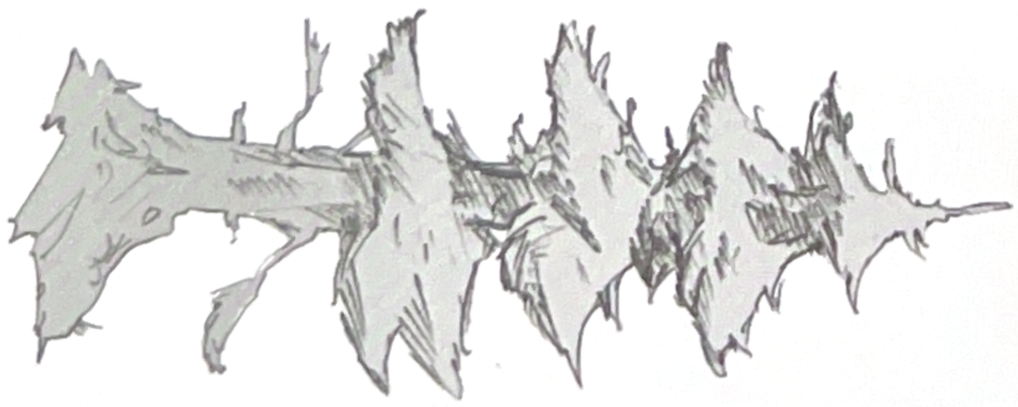
Forest Terrain

Forest Terrain

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